EDUCATING FOR CITIZENSHIP: TRANSFORMATION AND ACTIVISM THROUGH REFLECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

by

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Abstract

This study examines the connections between a commitment to educating for citizenship in the university and pedagogical strategies used to realize the goals associated with this commitment. One of the most common themes of the political philosophy and education literature regarding citizenship has to do with communicating across our differences. I used Jodi Dean's (1996) concept of reflective solidarity to explore the possibilities of this communication, particularly in the face of claims to morality. Reflective solidarity focuses on the communicative nature of solidarity by exploring contestation across our differences as we work toward understanding.

I interviewed ten educators from a variety of disciplines at the University of British Columbia to explore their experiences translating this commitment to social justice into practice. My analysis of their contributions resulted in three primary categories and numerous sub-categories of data that I referred to as (a) perspective on theory (the university as a site for citizenship education, defining educating for citizenship); (b) perspective on self (curriculum as contested space, teacher's role, self-reflective practice, solidarity through difference); and (c) perspective on other (voice, silence, listening, pluralism, safety and risk, power).

All of the participants discussed the dynamics of power, voice, silence, risk, pluralism and resistance that characterize their efforts to educate in a manner that promotes social justice. The pedagogical challenge of responding to heterosexism and homophobia in the classroom was specifically identified as difficult and increasingly contentious. This theme became central as I wove together the literature, the participants' contributions and my own experiences.
As a response to Dean's inattention to the context of the communicative relationships at the core of reflective solidarity, I propose the idea of reflective accountability. Reflective accountability challenges critical educators to think deeply about the sometimes taken-for-granted aspects of educating for social justice. Reflective accountability necessitates a critique of open public discourse and understanding as the unassailable cornerstone of education and highlights the possibility that there may be times when certain points of view need to be more critically examined, challenged and perhaps silenced when they are grounded in oppression.
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In Memory of Marlee Kline

Marlee Kline was one of my participants and a professor of law at the University of British Columbia and was incredibly supportive of my project. Marlee’s commitment to educating for social justice was palpable and I feel privileged to have met her and witnessed the passion she brought to her work.

“To me, the heart means the passion about things where you just get taken away somewhere else. Instead of just thinking about it, there might be once or twice a term when you are actually doing it. There are little moments where you feel like you made a difference . . . and that’s the heart in what we do.”

—Marlee Kline
November 3, 1999
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Glossary

**Educating for Citizenship/Educating for Social Justice**

Borrowing from the work of Kelly and Brandes (2002), educating for citizenship refers to: the critical examination of inequality, constructions of difference, and our perceptions of social justice; and, to the commitment to fostering and participating in social activism aimed at social justice.

**Reflective Solidarity**

Refers to the communicative nature as opposed to the common interest focus of solidarity. Our connection with others is forged through dialogue, disagreement and the goal of understanding our differences (Dean, 1996).

**Communicative We**

Denotes the shifting nature of identities that makes it impossible and undesirable to have an “us against them”; instead, our solidarity (or the “we”) is characterized by fluidity, indeterminacy and collaboration (Dean, 1996).

**Situated Hypothetical Third**

Refers to the expectation of reflective solidarity that the Other will always be represented in a dialogue. The participating partners have an obligation to mark the place of the Other not as an outsider but as an integral member of the discursive relationship within which we communicate across our differences. The Other is situated, as we need to think about the locations from which they would speak; and hypothetical in that we do not rely on their actual presence in the conversation (Dean, 1996).

**Discursive Universalism**

Dean (1996) refers to discursive universalism “as the never-ending conversation of humanity” (p. 162). This conversation is characterized by fallibility and contextuality and necessitates solidarity to ensure that participants persevere in the face of difference and disagreement.

**Transformative Practice**

Refers to a pedagogy that emphasizes the potential for instilling or reaffirming students’ commitment to social justice through critical engagement with issues of difference, equality and understanding. The goal is to promote a commitment to social activism.
Reflective Accountability

Contextualizes the goals of communication and understanding that are central to reflective solidarity within a framework of accountability to others. Reflective accountability critiques formal education’s reliance on and celebration of freedom of speech and points to a more critical reflection on the harm that can be done in the name of that speech, particularly in the case of discriminatory and oppressive comments.
There is a tendency in higher education to talk about the positive benefits of the development of critically minded individuals who will be better citizens because of their university experience. While educators expend a fair bit of energy making these grand claims, we spend relatively little time articulating our understanding of what it means to be a good citizen, how well the university can fulfill this obligation, and how our pedagogical choices facilitate this transformation.

It is my hope that this research will make more explicit the connections between a commitment to the educational and political goals of participatory democracy and particular teaching strategies. There need to be more innovative models for understanding the university’s role in supporting citizenship education through its pedagogical approaches and support of public and subaltern spaces (Fraser, 1997b).

The purpose of my thesis is to explore how Jodi Dean’s (1996) concept of reflective solidarity illuminates the practices associated with educating for citizenship in the university. Dean’s approach to understanding citizenship is particularly instructive because it deconstructs traditional distinctions between public and private spheres, incorporates multiple interpretations of citizenship and political action, deals constructively with the discourse regarding identity politics, and encourages the pursuit of social justice through the acknowledgement of difference and solidarity around communicative principles.

I wanted to learn how educators at the postsecondary level engaged in the ideas and the practices associated with educating for citizenship, so I spoke with ten educators
about their experiences and used their comments to inform my critical analysis of reflective solidarity. My discussion of educating for citizenship is framed by the areas I cover in Chapters 3 and 4 including: (a) contextualizing reflective solidarity in a broader discussion of citizenship in a participatory democracy; (b) introducing heterosexism and homophobia as a challenge to reflective solidarity; (c) examining the potential and constraints of the university as a site for the type of transformative practice that I am interested in; and (d) establishing a foundation for my discussion of practice by looking at some of the general themes of more critical approaches to teaching and learning.

After I developed this foundation, I began my examination of the appropriateness of reflective solidarity as a pedagogical goal. Specifically, I organized my analysis of reflective solidarity using three of its theoretical themes and began a conversation using relevant literature, the data and my own personal experience. First, I explored Dean’s discussion of moving from identity politics to the *communicative we* by examining the role of the professor and the curriculum in this transformation. Second, I examined the *situated, hypothetical third* (Dean, 1996) as it contributes to a better understanding of pluralism, the complexities of voice and the dynamics of resistance. Finally, I provided a more specific critique of reflective solidarity by examining Dean’s reliance on communication and understanding and proposing a rethinking of our responsibility to one another through *reflective accountability* that contextualizes the goal of understanding in a framework of accountability to others.

My examination of the practical implications of reflective solidarity in the context of education generally and postsecondary education more specifically embodies a critical examination of the type of discourse imagined by Dean. I argue that the substance and
context of these discussions needed to be more central to her analysis; however, I find her attention to the role of the Other and her use of a progressive model of identity politics that culminates in reflective solidarity to be an intriguing model of citizenship. I hope my dissertation contributes to the discussion of educating for citizenship by employing a model from outside the education literature and by proposing a more context-specific understanding of the dynamics of this discourse.

My Interest in the Topic

My interest in this area of research has been shaped by my experiences as an educator and administrator in higher education. My choices regarding curriculum development and teaching strategies have the potential to shape my students' understanding of their roles as citizens. I hope to be able to contribute to their understanding of what citizenship may mean to them through critical reflection and debate. At its best a meaningful higher education experience is not a comfortable, affirming experience. Instead, the experience challenges students (and teachers) to shift their perspectives by acknowledging the situatedness of those perspectives. Barnett (1990) argues that "this is the hallmark of a genuine higher education: the ability to conduct a critical dialogue with oneself" (p. 171).

There is a vital role for higher education to play in the development of socially responsible citizens; however, as educators, we must become clearer about our view of some of the essential ingredients of citizenship education and subsequently, how our curriculum and teaching strategies support our views of educating for social justice. I am very interested in how educators who are committed to this approach to education can develop relationships and infrastructures within the university to connect classrooms with
other non-instructional spheres of political discourse. It is this development and integration of various public spaces that holds the greatest promise as universities, or at least members of university communities, continue their commitment to social and political change.

Only through an increased clarity in conceptualizing and practicing education for citizenship will educators be able to articulate the importance of the university in supporting and encouraging the political participation of faculty and students. Giroux (1998) argues “the university is a major public sphere that influences massive numbers of people not only in terms of what is taught and how they might locate themselves in the context and content of specific knowledge forms but also in terms of the influence that the university has on large numbers of students who impact significantly on a variety of institutions in public life” (p. 44). I want to spend a bit of time discussing the historical and contemporary context of the university within which my interest and this specific study is situated. In particular, the expectations that various spheres of society have of the university are often grounded in very different perceptions of the utility of citizenship education. Giroux (1998) illustrates these conflicting perspectives as he notes that “while the university is being attacked for allowing tenured radicals to take over the humanities and undermine the authority of the traditional canon, there is the simultaneous implication that the university should not assume the role of the critical, public sphere actively engaged in addressing the social problems of either the larger society or the broader global landscape” (p. 42).

The current debate regarding the utility of education is deeply rooted in the historic conceptualization of the role of the university. An examination of this debate in
the current context of fiscal restraint, concerns about the politicization of the curriculum, and increasing demands for accountability regarding the outcomes of a university education (most often defined in terms of full-time, paid employment), highlights the need for a more creative and more socially responsible approach to thinking about the role of the university. It is in this current climate of uncertainty that identity politics and demands for inclusion are shaking the pillars of the university. Feminist and critical educators are challenging the construction of the formal and informal curriculum (Britzman, 1993; Davies, 1989; Mohanty, 1994; Sedgwick, 1992), drawing attention to harassment of students and faculty (Leitich, 1999; The Chilly Collective, 1995), promoting specialized programs of study (Kitch, 2002; McIntosh, 1989), advocating for special entrance requirements for marginalized groups (University of British Columbia, 2002), and demanding a higher profile for marginalized groups in research funding, curricular budgets and hiring and promotion practices (Andres Bellamy & Guppy, 1991; Morley, 2000). These challenges to the traditions of higher education necessitate a repositioning of the role of the university that embraces its inherently political role. My research is embedded in this context of contestation and uses Dean's analysis of identity politics and the concept of reflective solidarity to examine some of the opportunities provided by this debate.

There are two particular categories of discussion that have been instructive as I have thought about educating for citizenship and the practical and theoretical implications of a reconceptualization of utilitarianism in higher education. There are always hazards in setting up categories as they may oversimplify the argument they are intended to explicate. My discussion of educating for citizenship in the university has been informed
by what I refer to as traditionalist (and protectionist stream within this perspective) and reconstructionist positions on the role of the university. I acknowledge that these categories are neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive. A key theme that runs through both of these perspectives is the potential of universities to be sites of counter-discourses and counter-publics. My discussion of the possibilities of reflective solidarity has to be positioned in this debate and the too often used and overly simplified approach of understanding the role of the university by juxtaposing these two approaches.

The traditionalist perspective is best characterized by John Henry Newman's treatise, *The Idea of a University* (1852/1996), which outlined major goals of the university. Newman focused on the emancipatory nature of higher learning as he discussed the expansion of the mind and the development of character and argued "that there is a knowledge worth possessing for what it is, and not merely for what it does" (p. 139). One of the legacies of Newman's work is the internal tension that exists within the university between those who engage in what Newman would define as applied knowledge and those who are involved in the "true" liberal arts. The elitist hierarchy in the university that embraces those practicing the latter form of education has evolved from Newman's work and in part "arises from the failure of universities to work through a sense of mission that embraces the pursuit of both liberal and useful knowledge, which is the function of virtually all modern universities" (Turner, 1996, p. 291). I argue that a more creative approach to this tension would highlight the "usefulness" of liberal education and transform this unhelpful dichotomy into a more inclusive understanding of citizenship. Educators need to construct more interesting models of education that acknowledge and celebrate teachers and learners as citizens and agents of societal change.
The traditionalist perspective has been buoyed by the highly visible and much more emotional protectionist discourse that attacks the challenges to the traditional structures and curriculum of the university by invoking claims of political correctness run amok. This perspective encourages polemics such as Bercuson, Bothwell and Granatstein's *The Great Brain Robbery: Canada's Universities on the Road to Ruin* (1984), Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students* (1987), Kimball's *Tenured Radicals: How Politics has Corrupted our Higher Education* (1990), and D'Souza's *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus* (1991). The following quote from Kimball (1990) best exemplifies this particular genre of the literature:

> It is no secret that the academic study of the humanities in this country is in a state of crisis. Proponents of deconstruction, feminist studies, and other politically motivated challenges to the traditional tenets of humanistic study have by now become the dominant voice in the humanities departments of many of our best colleges and universities. . . . Their object is nothing less than the destruction of the values, methods, and goals of traditional humanistic study. (p. xi)

Kimball's (1990) inability or unwillingness to acknowledge the inherently political nature of all curricula allows him to dismiss any challenges to the status quo as motivated by special interests and therefore contrary to the "pure pursuit of knowledge" that should characterize educational experiences. Embedded in Kimball's perspective is a very conventional conceptualization of the university that is threatened by challenges to the university's claims of objectivity and its individualistic and uncritical understanding of meritocracy. Traditionalists commonly respond by dismissing these challenges as motivated by political correctness as opposed to legitimate demands for inclusion.
I reside in the reconstructionists' camp, as I locate the crisis in higher education in the demands for inclusion and more critical pedagogical approaches that are being resisted by various institutional forces. Numerous scholars argue that the university is characterized by an inhospitable climate for women and other minorities, biased curriculum, disproportionately low numbers of minority faculty, and implicitly discriminatory promotion and compensation processes (Andres Bellamy & Guppy, 1991; Caplan, 1993; Gaard, 1996; Morley, 2000; Stewart & Drakich, 1995; The Chilly Collective, 1995). The literature, and subsequent appeals for change, in these areas appear to be major catalysts for backlash discourses (e.g., the protectionists) that emphasize the perceived need for academics to be free from these types of ideological demands. The more critical perspective enveloped in the reconstructionist camp includes Giroux (1998), who argues "that public intellectuals must address combining the mutually interdependent roles of educators and citizens. This implies finding ways to connect the practice of classroom teaching to the operation of power in the larger society" (p. 48).

Scott (1995) argues that the oppositional and often warlike dichotomies and language used to describe the "crisis" in higher education distort and oversimplify fundamental issues. Instead, Scott maintains that the historical and contemporary debate regarding the role of the university can be better understood "as a series of paradoxes that have produced further paradoxes" (p. 294). For example, as challenges to the university have demanded more inclusive (and ultimately more diverse) approaches to higher education, there have been simultaneous demands for greater community and solidarity of

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1 My dissertation draws on aspects of social reconstructionism as I develop my argument for educating for social justice.
purpose. It should not be surprising, or distressing, that with diversity comes debate and conflict—arguably important characteristics of our universities and our definition of an educated citizenry. An examination of the tensions inherent in discussions of individuality and community, the constraints placed on innovative approaches to research, and the distrust of theory reframe the crisis in higher education in terms of the university’s broader mandate with respect to democracy and political participation. Giroux (1998) explores this larger responsibility, noting that “if progressive cultural and educational workers are to resist the conservative assault on critical public spheres, they must be able to defend institutions of higher education as deeply moral and political spaces. They must define themselves not merely as intellectuals who are professional academics acting alone but as citizens whose collective knowledge and actions presuppose specific visions of public life, community, and moral accountability” (p. 45).

It is this type of reflection on the role of the university in educating for citizenship that I think is essential if we are to move this long-standing debate to a new level. I believe my research may contribute to the reframing of this discussion.

*The Boundaries of My Analysis*

There are a number of parameters within which my study is situated, and it is important for me to talk about what I have attempted to do by also talking about what I have not done. My use of Dean’s model necessitates that my work is grounded in political theory; however, this study is not meant to be an in-depth examination of feminist interpretations of political theory. I only engage with political theorists such as Habermas, Mouffe, Young and Fraser to the extent that I am reflecting on Dean’s work.
My primary focus is on how the particular political construct of reflective solidarity contributes to my examination of educating for citizenship in the university.

My use of the term pedagogy should be understood as including both curriculum and teaching strategies. The "what" and "how" we teach are intricately connected and need to be understood as inseparable. This dissertation explores educating for citizenship as it occurs within the context of courses and programs. There are many other venues in the university that my study could not adequately address; however, there are references to some of these other locations including: women's centres, teaching and learning centres, and community-based research.

A driving force for my initial interest in the research questions embedded in this study was the duality that has been perpetuated that juxtaposes utilitarian (employment-relevant) education with general/liberal or citizenship education. As I have already indicated, utilitarianism refers to a very traditional and economically driven definition of the value of higher education. The central question of this paradigm is how does the curriculum relate to the employability skills demanded in the market-place? A common rebuttal to this perspective is the argument that skills related to critical thinking and formulation of argument are intricately connected to employability. I suggest a different approach that stresses the need for a redefinition of utilitarianism by incorporating education for citizenship. There needs to be a decentering of employability through an expanded definition of utilitarianism that integrates social, economic and political interests of education into a more holistic and noble set of educational goals. The central question of educating for citizenship revolves around encouraging students to participate in their communities in ways that promote social justice through critical and passionate
engagement with their curricular and personal experiences.

My study is situated within the university; however, the discourse regarding educating for citizenship is a much broader debate that encompasses the elementary and secondary school system, as well as a myriad of alternative venues of teaching and learning. Throughout my dissertation, I refer to discussions of schooling where I believe they intersect with my examination of the university. One of the more interesting points of intersection was the discussion of teacher education programs whereby schoolteachers are being educated in the university. I hope this exploration of citizenship education within the arena of higher education will contribute to these broader discussions.

*Putting Communication Across Differences at the Centre of Citizenship*

I recognize that there are multiple interpretations of democratic or participatory citizenship; however, I use Dean's (1996) discussion of reflective solidarity as my framework. Dean's approach emphasizes a definition of citizenship that centres on the need for individuals to come together through discussion and debate in a way that embraces their differences and varied and multi-dimensional experiences. It is through this solidarity that individuals and groups will participate in the democratic process of debate and activism that will promote an inclusive and dynamic commitment to social justice.

According to Dean (1996), "solidarity can be modeled as an interaction involving at least three persons: I ask you to stand by me over and against a third. But rather than presuming the exclusion and opposition of the third, the ideal of reflective solidarity thematizes the voice of the third to reconstruct solidarity as an inclusionary ideal for contemporary politics and societies" (p. 3). This idea of the situated, hypothetical third is
critical to my discussion of the possibilities of reflective solidarity in difficult teaching moments.

Public and counter-public spaces (Fraser, 1997b) are essential for the development of these alliances through reasoned and informed debate. *Publics* and *counter-publics* are public spaces that are characterized by the presentation, refutation and rearticulation of argument. Ideally, public and counter-public spaces are organized around the exchange and reformulation of ideas. Counter-publics are distinct from publics in that they are characterized by strategies and ideas that are more likely to be found outside mainstream forums; however, ideally all public spaces should include multiple voices and perspectives. This research recognizes that universities are only one of many public and counter-public spaces.

I was drawn to Dean’s exploration of citizenship because of its emphasis on communication and the partiality of our experiences and our understanding of others. Dean interrogates identity politics in a manner that does not negate their role but attempts to move us beyond the entrenchment that often accompanies these exclusionary politics. I was attracted to Dean’s examination of our accountability to one another through the lens of a situated, hypothetical third; however, I was also intrigued by how the dynamics of reflective solidarity might look in practice. In particular, I wanted to know what happens when disagreements rooted in our differences are profound and resonate at the core of our being.

Dean (1996) alludes to this tension by acknowledging that oppressive perspectives and behaviours are destructive to reflective solidarity through the absence of accountability to one another across our differences. However, she does not explain how
we are to respond to these oppressive voices that are bound to be heard in the discourse she imagines.

A number of critiques (Love, 1997; Tamplin, 1997) of Dean’s (1996) work have noted that she does not address the locations where the discourse ethics that characterize reflective solidarity “can and should occur” (Love, 1997, p. 43). As I move Dean’s discussion of reflective solidarity inside the university, I think my study responds to these queries about the practical opportunities and constraints of reflective solidarity. I challenge the assumptions of equal access to discourse that seem to be inherent in Dean’s model as I focus increasing attention on how the principles work in difficult teaching moments.

*Educating for Citizenship*

Educating for citizenship is a concept borrowed from Osborne’s (1995) work and refers to the role that all levels of education have in recognizing the inherently political nature of the curriculum and promoting various forms of political participation. The goal is not to encourage a particular position on a particular issue; instead, the goal is to provide students with the opportunity to reflect on and engage in political discourse. My use of educating for citizenship extends this discussion by framing this engagement under the umbrella of teaching for social justice. More specifically, I want to borrow Kelly and Brandes (2002) synthesis of the literature where their view of democratic citizenship as more active and participatory accords with the basic tenets of work that is variously described as critical pedagogy (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 1999; Osborne, 1991; Shannon, 1995), feminist pedagogy (e.g., Briskin & Coulter, 1992; Lather, 1991; Maher, 1999), social reconstructionism (e.g., Sleeter & Grant, 1994), and critical multiculturalism (e.g., Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). The three common themes emerging from these perspectives that relate most directly to our inquiry into beginning teachers’ understandings of
what it means to teach for social justice can be summarized as: (a) critical analysis of social and institutional inequalities; (b) commitment to 'principled action to achieve social justice, not only for those around but for strangers' (Greene, 1998, p. xxxiii); and (c) willingness to question one's own understanding of social justice, in part through listening to alternative perspectives. [emphasis in the original] (p. 6)

All of the participants talked about understanding as a key goal of educating for citizenship. Kumashiro (2000) probes the idea of understanding, arguing that “rather than aim for understanding of some critical perspective, anti-oppressive pedagogy should aim for effect by having students engage with relevant aspects of critical theory and extend its terms of analysis to their own lives, but then critique it for what it overlooks or for what it forecloses, what it says and makes possible as well as what it leaves unsaid and unthinkable" [emphasis in the original] (p. 39). The specifics of the approaches used by the participants in my study vary from more liberal strategies to more critical and post-structural approaches, but I believe all of them would support the descriptors of teaching for social justice invoked by Kelly and Brandes (2002) and the goals of anti-oppressive pedagogy (Kumashiro, 2000).

Contribution of Research

The primary goal of my study is to examine pedagogical strategies and experiences associated with educating for citizenship using Dean’s concept of reflective solidarity as a framework for my analysis. Dean does not discuss reflective solidarity in the context of education; however, she does examine the role of law, arguing that “the solidarity of law requires that we take into account those at the margins, those situated, hypothetical thirds who break through the boundaries of determined legal concepts, generating new possibilities for inclusion. . . . We must ourselves attempt to break
through concepts and interpretations that, though they may seem plausible to ‘us’, remain
too determined to allow for the inclusion of ‘them’” (p. 137).

I analyze Dean’s (1996) own consideration of law, by examining MacDougall’s
(1998) and Eisenstein’s (1996) discussions of the pedagogical aspects of law and using
them as an invitation to explore the opportunities and obstacles associated with reflective
solidarity as a helpful pedagogical framework in the university. In particular, my
dissertation uses the discussion of homosexuality in the classroom, one often infused with
a great deal of emotion and tension, as a provocative test for the communicative solidarity
embodied in Dean’s model.

Dean’s (1996) concept of reflective solidarity explores how pluralism and critical
analysis can be integrated to develop a solidarity that “builds from ties created by dissent”
(p. 29). In a review of Dean’s (1996) *Solidarity of Strangers: Feminism after Identity
Politics*, the book upon which I ground my study, Stevens (1998) comments that “what I
find most valuable about Dean’s book is that she focuses on the dynamics of group
interactions per se and not the substance of what is discussed. According to Dean, the
problem is not how to arrive at justice, but rather how to get along, not despite the fact
that we disagree, but despite the fact that we belong to different groups” (p. 736). While I
concur with Stevens’ (1998) appreciation for Dean’s examination of process, I think
Dean’s contribution is weakened because she does not attend to the contextual and
substantive dilemmas that vary by the topics being explored. Dean discusses context as it
relates to discursive universalism but does not address the consequences of context in any
meaningful way. Throughout my dissertation, I emphasize the consequences of this
inattention to substantive differences and hope that my use of Dean’s work with an
emphasis on context and content contributes to discussions of critical pedagogy and educating for citizenship.

Interestingly, this uncritical discussion of content, understanding and structural inequalities that frame opportunities for discourse makes Dean’s reference to racist and patriarchal views as destructive to reflective solidarity accurate but theoretically inadequate and strategically empty. Dean briefly points to the consequences of these imbalances but does not follow that acknowledgment with a discussion of responses to these dynamics. In what I call reflective accountability, there is the opportunity to invoke our own silence and/or promote the silence of others as strategies to fulfill our responsibilities as citizens. We need to think about how the content of the conversation, particularly as it relates to the societal accommodation of heterosexism and homophobia, informs the dynamics of the exchange and indeed the decision to participate. This thread of silence surfaces throughout this thesis as it is inseparable from discussions of discourse that emphasize auditory contributions.

Once I began my interviews I was intrigued by the way that sexuality, in particular lesbian and gay rights, was characterized as eliciting some of the most contentious teaching moments. As I already indicated, this particular topic resonates with me on a number of levels. First, I am a lesbian. Second, I am a mother of three young children who are growing up in a world where bigotry and state-endorsed discrimination against lesbians and gay men continue. Third, I am an educator who shares the observations of my participants, who identify sexuality as particularly contentious.

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2 Throughout my dissertation I refer to gay men and lesbians; however, I believe there are aspects of my discussion that are relevant to more inclusive discussions of sexuality (e.g. bisexuality, transgendered experiences).
To probe this theme, I examine how Petrovic’s (1998, 1999) examination of moral democratic stands (MDS) and moralistic stands (MS) contributes to my discussion of the value of reflective solidarity in these more intense and emotional discussions.

Petrovic (1999)—drawing from a variety of theorists (Howe, 1997; Taylor, 1992; Young, 1990a)—argues that “democracy requires adherence to the virtue of recognition and the principle of non-oppression” (p. 203), and heterosexist and homophobic viewpoints violate both of these principles. In his support of these two principles, Petrovic (1998, 1999) points to Taylor’s definition of the virtue of recognition as necessitating that “we all recognize the equal value of different cultures; that we not only let them survive, but acknowledge their worth” (cited in Petrovic 1998, p. 45). Petrovic (1998) argues that “historically, whether or not groups or their individual members have been ‘recognized’ has been a function of differences in power and privilege” (p. 45). The principle of non-oppression emphasizes the establishment of policies and strategies that try to ensure that the principle of recognition is translated into action. According to Petrovic (1998) “the democratic sieve is the application of the two democratic principles—recognition and non-oppression” (p. 46). While there are other roots to homophobia, a Christian anti-gay stance is particularly important to dismantle because of its historical and contemporary power in the legal, social and moral regulation of the Canadian population.

An illustration of this permission regarding sexuality was provided by one of the participants in my study:

There was one year where I had them read Minnie Bruce Pratt’s *Heart, Skin, Blood* article. I wanted them to read it because it was a very personal autobiographical account that led them into a different way of writing and thinking about writing as a social scientist. Outrageous things came out. When it comes to sexuality, they seem to feel licensed to say whatever assuming that there’s no one in the class who could possibly be affected by it. [Gerry]
Dean's inattention to substantive differences among people is further exacerbated by her commitment to the goal of understanding as the primary mechanism for achieving reflective solidarity. I explore the desirability and accessibility of this goal of understanding as it relates to the university classroom and reflective solidarity. In response to these dilemmas, I argue the necessity of a position of reflective accountability that challenges the seemingly unquestioning acceptance of the principle of respectful dialogue and the integral role that understanding and reason plays in these relationships.

Readings (1996) argues that the contemporary university, much like a Renaissance city, will never be returned to its previous form and can never be transformed into something entirely new. Instead, Readings (1996) asserts that we must work with the legacy of the university to recast it in a way that maintains its historical commitment to liberal education and embraces the need for a more inclusive understanding of what must constitute a liberal education. I agree with Readings that educators must situate our challenges and demands for change within a historical and political context; however, I would extend his call for inclusivity by promoting a more critical examination of liberal education and its goal of educating for citizenship. Giroux (1998) argues that "university educators must bring to bear in their classrooms and other pedagogical sites the courage, analytical tools, moral vision, time, and dedication that is necessary to return universities to their most important task: creating a public sphere of citizens who are able to exercise power over their own lives and especially over the conditions of knowledge acquisition" (p. 57).

It is my hope that my research will contribute to this discussion by critically examining, and in some cases disrupting, more conservative and traditional assumptions
about the goals of higher education. Clearly, I am optimistic about the positive potential of the university as a site of educating for social justice. However, any discussion of democratic education must acknowledge that the classroom is not a democracy. That being said, I enthusiastically support Giroux's (1998) assessment that “as a critical public space whose moral and educative dimensions impact directly on the renewal of everyday life, the university becomes indispensable for rendering students accountable to their obligations as critical citizens who address what role knowledge and authority might play in the reconstruction of democracy itself” (p. 46). I hope that this dissertation encourages a closer examination of the potential of universities to act as sites of educating for citizenship and how pedagogical approaches need to respond to these educational goals.
Chapter II

Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to review the methodological issues I considered and choices I made as I developed and completed my research project. Some of the most critical issues that shaped the relationship between my theoretical framework and the data were my sampling strategy, the interview format, the thematic coding of the data, and my personal and professional relationship with the research questions. Ultimately my dissertation represents a conversation among the participants, the literature and myself.

Rationale for Methodology and Research Design

As I discussed in the introduction, my interest in this project arose from my own pedagogical journey and engagement with the often-cited goal of promoting critical thinking. I believe that this goal of critical thinking is a proxy for educating for citizenship and I wanted to explore how educators who identify as teaching for democratic citizenship, understood, explained and engaged with this concept in their work. My focus on the participants’ articulation of this engagement supports my use of interviews with teachers as opposed to classroom observation or interviews with students. In support of this approach, Marshall and Rossman (1999) argue that “when the researcher is using in-depth interviews as the sole way of gathering data, she should have demonstrated through the conceptual framework that the purpose of the study is to uncover and describe the participants’ perspectives on events—that is, that the subjective view is what matters” (p. 110).
In addition to the interviews, I asked participants if they had any teaching materials (e.g. course outlines, assignments) that illustrated their practice. I also held a focus group and I looked at some institutional documents from the Trek 2000 process. The individual interviews were the primary data source.

As I stated in the Introduction, Dean’s (1996) discussion of reflective solidarity provided the theoretical framework that guided my analysis. I was intrigued by how Dean’s ideas about solidarity through discourse might manifest themselves in a university setting and how they might contribute to a better understanding of educating for citizenship.

In assessing the quality of my research design, I concur with Rubin and Rubin (1995) that “qualitative interviewing design is flexible, iterative and continuous, rather than prepared in advance and locked in stone” [emphasis in the original] (p. 43). However, in response to this element of uncertainty, there are a number of critical issues or criteria that shaped my research. The first guiding principle is the transparency (Rubin & Rubin, 1995) of the process, including clear and thorough descriptions of data collection strategies and how the transcripts are made, verified, edited, and analyzed. A related concept is “credibility, in which the goal is to demonstrate that the inquiry was conducted in such a manner as to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described” [emphasis in the original] (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 192).

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3 Trek 2000: A Vision for the 21st Century is a planning document that UBC President Martha Piper introduced as a blueprint to respond to the changing context within which institutions of higher learning are operating. President Piper argues that Trek 2000 outlines “the path that we believe must be followed if UBC is to attain its goal of becoming Canada’s finest university” (p. 1). The document outlines principles, goals and strategies regarding the people, learning, research, communities, and international opportunities that characterize the activities of the university.
A third aspect of quality is transferability, which refers to the researcher’s ability to “argue that his [or her] findings will be useful to others in similar situations, with similar research questions or questions of practice” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 193). Other researchers characterize transferability somewhat differently by arguing that “thick description allows the reader to determine how meaningful and/or relevant or ‘generalizable’ the research is to them by allowing them to ‘see’ more of the context in which the investigation occurred. The method is, of course, in contrast to traditional procedures in which the researcher informs the reader (via the statistical process of hypothesis testing) whether something is significant or not” (Gerdes, 2001, p. 184). I find these two different but complementary processes particularly instructive as the fundamental shift in onus forced me to be much more introspective as I contemplated the potential contribution of my work. Ultimately, I hope that I have satisfied the criteria of the latter discussion of transferability in writing a dissertation that readers will respond to for many different reasons because of the richness of the participants’ contributions and my ability to synthesize and comment on a diverse array of scholarship.

A fourth criterion to consider is what Rubin and Rubin (1995) describe as communicability or the ability of participants to see themselves in the research. The multi-staged process of verification that is embedded in this principle was centrally important to my work and evidenced by my repeated efforts to include participants in the editing process.

Participants

Given that I wanted to talk to educators who taught in a manner that promoted social activism, I decided that a purposive sampling technique would be the most
efficient approach. I decided to use the University of British Columbia for two reasons. It is a comprehensive university with a clear commitment to research.

The use of the term university in the foundations literature and a great deal of feminist and critical pedagogy literature seems to assume this more traditional model. Second, it was the most convenient because of my committee's more intimate knowledge of the faculty. I decided on ten participants as it seemed to be a reasonable number of individuals to interview in a manner that achieved my goals and to pull together for a focus group. As I indicated in my discussion of transferability, one of the major goals of my project was to provide an analysis of educating for citizenship that others, including the participants, would find contributed to their research, practice and thinking about the issues. I was confident that ten carefully selected individuals would provide excellent data over the course of two interviews.

I began with a meeting with my committee, Deirdre Kelly, Allison Tom and Reva Joshee, during which we brainstormed a list of professors who they knew to be committed to educating for citizenship as I had defined it. It became clear that the two UBC members of my committee would both be excellent participants, and it was at this point that I began considering using one of them as part of my sample. Deirdre seemed to be the logical choice as she was my supervisor. In addition to Deirdre, that initial meeting resulted in a list of fourteen names from ten different disciplines (Education, English, Science, Geography, Nursing, Social Work, Aboriginal Studies, Law, Sociology, and Kinesiology). From that list I sent an initial letter to ten of the participants selected

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4 The University of British Columbia (UBC) is located in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada admitting its first students in 1915. UBC is a comprehensive university made up of 12 faculties, 1740 full-time faculty, and approximately 29,000 undergraduate and 6500 graduate students. UBC has approximately 180,000 alumni living in 120 nations around the world (http://www.ubc.ca).
to maximize the breadth of the disciplines in the pool. While representativeness was not a goal, I believe there is merit in including experiences from different areas of the university. The ten potential participants who were sent contact letters included two men and eight women who were all early to mid-career; four visible minorities; assistant, associate and full professors, a dean, and two directors. Eight of the original ten expressed an interest in participating in my project; however, three of those individuals were unable to participate during the period that I had designated for data collection. Two of the individuals did not respond to my letter or follow up e-mails. I sent letters to five more participants and received positive replies from all five. My final sample of ten included one First Nations woman, no men, seven disciplines, and had representativeness from all tenured ranks in the university. While representativeness was not an issue, I was disappointed that I did not have any men and only one visible minority in my final sample.

I think it is important to note that while I was approaching individuals whom I thought were committed to the general goal of educating for citizenship, each of these individuals then self-selected based on the information I provided in my letter of introduction (see Appendix A) and consent form (see Appendix B). In particular I told each individual that they had been identified as a person committed to a pedagogical approach that encourages the social and political participation of your students. The purpose of my research is to explore how a radical democratic conceptualization of citizenship supports this type of commitment to educating for social change and how education for citizenship, based on this conceptualization, is practiced in a university setting. A secondary goal of this research is to encourage reflection on the potential of feminist pedagogy practiced within and outside the classroom to encourage political participation. . . . For the purposes of selecting potential participants and for your own self-selection, educating for citizenship has been defined as the role that all levels of education take in recognizing the inherently political nature of
the curriculum and promoting various forms of political participation. The goal is not to encourage a particular position on a particular issue; instead, the goal is to provide students with the opportunity to reflect on and engage in political discourse. (see Appendix B).

The final sample was made up of the following ten participants. Jo-ann Archibald was the Director of the First Nations House of Learning and a Senior Instructor in the Department of Educational Studies. Jo-ann’s areas of interest included curriculum and instruction, teacher education and First Nation’s storytelling. Shauna Butterwick was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Studies with a special interest in feminist adult education, policy analysis, ethnography, collaborative/community-based inquiry, women and work, and learning and social movements. Dawn Currie was an Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology and Director of Undergraduate Programs in Women’s Studies. Dawn’s interests included gender inequality, feminist theory and research, and gender and feminist cultural studies. Wendy Frisby was an Associate Professor in the Leisure and Sport Management Program in the School of Human Kinetics specializing in Sport and Leisure Management whose interests included organizational theory, gender relations, action research, community health, and qualitative methods. Deirdre Kelly was an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Studies whose interests included feminist studies in education, school drop-outs/push-outs, secondary school reform, and teaching for social justice. Marlee Kline was an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law whose research areas included child welfare law, feminist analysis of law and structures of racism within the law. Karen Meyer was the Director of the Centre for the Study of Curriculum and Instruction whose special areas of interest included sociological and epistemological issues of collaborative learning in science. Geraldine (Gerry) Pratt was a Professor in the Department of
Geography whose research focused on feminist geography and housing and labour markets. Susan Boyd was an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law and the Chair in Feminist Legal Studies whose interests included feminist legal theory, family law and gender, lesbian legal issues and child custody law. Maria Klawe was the Vice-President of Student and Academic Services before becoming the Dean of Science, whose interests included girls and technology and innovative approaches to supporting student success.

Aside from Deirdre (my supervisor) and Shauna (one of my professors), I did not know any of the participants before I began my project. Other than Deirdre’s more intimate knowledge of my research question, I do not think there were any significant issues that arose because of my previous relationships with these two participants or lack of relationship with the others. I do talk about some of the issues related to Deirdre’s dual role as my supervisor and a participant later in this chapter.

Obviously all of the participants in my study are privileged voices by virtue of the space they occupy in the university; however, given some of the more traditional concepts of teaching and learning in the university and a variety of political pressures regarding increasing demands for employment-related outcomes for postsecondary education (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2002), their voices are marginalized in some settings because of their pedagogical decisions.

Ultimately I believe my sample was composed of insightful, enthusiastic and committed educators. I believe these ten women provided incredibly candid and instructive insights regarding their philosophy and practice, and I know that my practice has changed in concrete ways because of our conversations.
Data Collection

Interviews

In describing my relationship with my participants, I find "the term conversational partner has the advantage of emphasizing the link between interviewing and conversation, and the active role of the interviewee in shaping the discussion. Moreover, the term suggests a congenial and cooperative experience, as both interviewer and interviewee work together to achieve the shared goal of understanding" [emphasis in the original] (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, p. 11). I tend to be fairly relaxed and personable, and I think in nine of the ten interviews these qualities resulted in conversations that were detailed, candid and productive for both the participants and for me.

I interviewed all but one of the participants twice, and each of the interviews lasted between one to two hours. All of the interviews were conducted in the participants’ offices except for my interviews with Shauna and my first interview with Deirdre, which we completed in their homes. The schedules of the interviews did not allow me to complete all of the first interviews before beginning the second set and I do think that it would have been better to have completed all of the exploratory interviews first. Before each of the second interviews, I reviewed a transcript of the first interview and I used the second conversation to explore further areas that had been raised by the interviewee or other participants. I also offered participants an opportunity to review the transcript of their first interview before our follow-up meeting. Shauna was the only one to request a transcript of her first interview prior to our second meeting.

Unlike most quantitative research where the data analysis starts when the data collection is complete, the analysis in this qualitative project began with my first
interview. Neuman (1997) argues that “the results of early data analysis guide subsequent data collection. Thus, analysis is less a distinct final stage of research than a dimension of research that stretches across all stages” (p. 420).

Reinharz (1992) notes that semi-structured or open-ended interview strategies have gained prominence in feminist research, as this approach allows for a greater level of depth than a more structured format and “offers researchers access to people’s ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher” (p. 19). Neuman (1997) acknowledges that “the goals of feminist research vary, but two common goals are to give greater visibility to the subjective experience of women and to increase the involvement of the respondent in the research process” (p. 262). I definitely used a format that I think increased the possibility of having rich conversations, including trying to interview each participant more than once; using open-ended questions; discussing my own experience; using responsive listening; encouraging story-telling; and being committed to the avenues, no matter how tangential, taken by the participants (Neuman, 1997).

My interviews were semi-structured in the sense that I had eight major areas that I would explore using the following questions (See Appendix C): (a) **Background** Describe your responsibilities at UBC (e.g., length of service, courses taught, professional activities); (b) **Philosophy** How do you describe your philosophy of teaching and learning? What are your pedagogical goals? How did you come to this approach? (c) **Practice** How do your philosophy/goals translate into practice? (e.g., your teaching style, expectations of students in class, evaluation, curriculum, and connections to communities); (d) **Success** How would you evaluate your success? Have you been
successful? How do you define success? (e) **Support** How have you experienced support for your approach? For example, have you received positive feedback from students, colleagues, the institution (e.g. awards, policy documents)? (f) **Resistance** Describe forms of resistance (overt/covert), if any, that you have experienced as a result of your pedagogical approach; (g) **Shifts in Pedagogy** How has your pedagogy evolved over time in light of your experiences (support and resistance)? (h) **The University** Some argue that universities are not appropriate sites for the more communal goals of educating for social justice, as the university promotes a very individual notion of citizenship (e.g., how universities reward success). What do you think?

Having two interviews and a focus group enhanced the quality of my data, as it allowed for clarification and elaboration on previous responses to these questions and other issues that arose during the conversations.

**Focus Group**

The focus group was part of my original research design to afford me one more opportunity to tap into the experience of my pool of participants; however, for a number of my participants, the focus group became an anticipated pay-off for participating in the project. All of my participants indicated that there was very little, if any, space to examine their pedagogy with their colleagues, and most of them saw the focus group as an opportunity to have that type of conversation. The focus group, as a method, acknowledges “that an individual’s attitudes and beliefs do not form in a vacuum: People often need to listen to others’ opinions and understandings in order to form their own” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 114). While it was not one of my primary questions, the difficulty that these educators had finding opportunities to discuss teaching and learning
with colleagues was striking. Two of my participants (Jo-ann and Gerry) indicated that they would not be able to participate in the focus group, as they were unable to take the time, irrespective of when the meeting was scheduled. Eight of the ten indicated their enthusiasm for meeting with the other participants; however, scheduling conflicts resulted in me not being able to ultimately find a time when everyone could meet. In hindsight I think I should have expended more energy in trying to find a time that worked for everyone. While I believe that I did my best at the time, Susan and Karen expressed their disappointment that they had to miss the gathering.

The focus group was held on November 3, 1999 on campus, and the session lasted approximately two hours. The following individuals were in attendance: Shauna, Dawn, Wendy, Deirdre, Marlee, Maria, Katherine Watson (recorder) and myself. The two primary goals of the session were to: (a) provide an opportunity for the participants to talk to one another about some of the pedagogical challenges and strategies that they had discussed in the interviews and experienced in their classrooms, and (b) allow me to probe further on the broader concept of educating for citizenship.

It was very clear from the beginning of the session that the participants were taking advantage of the opportunity to talk to each other, as they were directing their comments to the entire group as opposed to me as the moderator. I endeavoured to provide space for these conversations by not jumping in after comments, thus allowing more opportunities for participants to follow-up on their own comments or others’ contributions. It seemed that there were two major categories of contributors: (a) individuals who seemed very interested in listening to others, and (b) individuals who wanted to describe experiences so that others might provide feedback. Given the nature
of the group, everyone was attentive and engaged in the topic; however, as might be expected in any group discussion, there were individuals who took us on interesting but less relevant paths, and some who were more talkative than others.

The proceedings of the focus group were recorded in three ways. I took brief notes, a recorder took notes and the meeting was audiotaped and later transcribed. The focus group data were analyzed and used in the same manner as the interview data and I have noted in the text when I am using focus group data. As I said earlier, the individual interviews were the richest source of data.

Review of Documents

Curriculum material.

Three of the participants (Dawn Currie, Wendy Frisby, and Deirdre Kelly) provided some documents that they thought illustrated some of the points they had made during their interviews. The documents included a course outline, a student assignment, overheads and the mission statement and learning outcomes developed by the School of Human Kinetics at UBC.


I did not do an in-depth analysis of the Trek 2000 document; however, I did review the document looking for references to the types of students, faculty and educational experiences that I was interested in for this project.

Audiotapes and Transcription

As I have already indicated, all of the interviews and the focus group were audiotaped in their entirety. Given who my participants were, I do not believe there were
any disadvantages to using a tape recorder; in fact there was some comfort expressed by participants knowing that their comments were being accurately recorded. Each of the tapes was transcribed verbatim by a third party who had signed a confidentiality agreement. I edited the transcripts with the goal of making the text more readable, understandable and coherent. After this first edit of the transcripts, I sent a copy to each of the participants asking for any corrections or points of clarification. Two of my participants returned transcripts with corrections and clarifications. Two of my participants returned e-mails that indicated that aside from hoping that I would be doing another edit for clarity and coherence, they were comfortable with the transcripts at this point in the process. The rest of my participants did not respond, which, as I indicated in the covering letter attached to the transcripts, I would interpret to mean that they had no problems with the transcripts.

There were a number of issues that I considered as I edited the transcripts. I wanted to ensure that I was being respectful of both the text and the spirit of the text. Based on the feedback that I received, I felt it was important to edit in a manner that resulted in the clearest and most coherent representation of the comments provided by participants. In many respects I agree with DeVault’s suggestion that “we respect the intention behind women’s words and learn to listen to phrases such as ‘you know’ as a request for understanding. . . . [and that] we should hear the richness of speech and allow our writing to be similarly complex” (cited in Reinhart, 1992, p. 40). Not surprisingly, the original transcripts included notes referring to pauses and laughter and included phrases such as “you know” before I edited these comments out. I feel that the depth, integrity and generosity of the material provided by participants coupled with my editing
strategy resulted in a body of text that was insightful, respectful and achieved my research goals as I honoured the voices of these ten educators.

Consent

My original consent form, signed by all of the participants, indicated that anonymity would be maintained. However, once I started my interviews I indicated to participants that I hoped, wherever possible, I would be able to identify them as I very quickly discovered that masking their identities would force me to leave out valuable information that served to contextualize their observations. In response to this request, all of the participants indicated that they were willing to operate on the assumption that they would be identified knowing that they had final approval of the quotes to be used. At this point it was also discussed that there was nothing stopping me from using a mixed approach that allowed for the identification of some of the participants and not others. As well, there was certainly an opportunity to maintain anonymity for some of the responses of participants while disclosing their identity for others. I feel very confident that my participants trusted me, as a number of them told me things “off the record” despite the fact that the tape recorder was still recording and that in the majority of cases they did not know me. After their final review of the data, all of my participants provided their final consent to use the quotes that I had sent for their review. All of the participants made minor technical changes in order to clarify the points they were making. Jo-ann asked that one quote not be used, as it did not make sense to her. There were no other requests for me to delete a participant’s contribution. All of the participants indicated that they felt comfortable being identified with the project and with their contributions.
The death of Marlee Kline in November 2001 introduced another layer to my thinking about confidentiality and anonymity. I sent Marlee’s partner a letter expressing my sympathy and asking if he would feel comfortable reviewing the excerpts that I intended to use in my thesis. Marlee’s partner, Professor Joel Bakan, responded that “yes, absolutely, you have my consent” and indicated that he did not feel the need to review the quotes.

Data Analysis

Mauthner and Doucet (1998) note that “there can be no ‘pure’, or ‘real’ or ‘authentic’ experiences or voices of respondents because of the complex set of relationships between the respondents’ experiences, voices and narratives, and the researcher’s interpretation and representation of these experiences/voices/narratives. However, there are ways in which we can attempt to hear more of their voices, and understand more of their perspective through the ways in which we conduct our data analysis” [emphasis in the original] (p. 140). While I have always been incredibly attentive to the first point in this quote, I became much more acutely aware of my responsibilities as I grappled with the challenge presented in the latter point.

I found Patton’s (1990) differentiation between “indigenous typologies” and “analyst-constructed typologies” to be instructive as I examined my data (cited in Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Patton says “indigenous typologies” are “those created and expressed by participants and are generated through analyses of the local use of language. Analyst-constructed typologies are those created by the researcher that are grounded in the data but not necessarily used explicitly by participants” (cited in Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 154).
There is a hazard that indigenous categories might be understood as those that emerge from the data without an appropriate acknowledgement of the very active role that the researcher still plays in identifying, coding and ultimately representing these themes. However, I think the concept is useful in locating common language, and even more useful in highlighting that common language does not always equal shared understandings. Some examples of indigenous categories that I used in my analysis at various stages were students as consumers, pluralism, learner-centred education, and resistance. Some examples of analyst-constructed typologies would include the teacher-as-text, silence and educating for citizenship.

The Researcher Brings the Themes

This idea of analyst-constructed typologies reminded me of the hazards of using categories in a manner that implies that they emerge from the data. I think Mauthner and Doucet (1998) say it best when they observe that “perhaps data analysis is also difficult to articulate because in doing so we are directly confronted with the subjective, interpretive nature of what we do—having to interpret respondents’ words in some way, while realizing that these words could be interpreted in a multitude of ways” (p. 122).

Certainly, this observation is true of my research as well; however, I feel confident, through the repeated opportunities for the participants to verify the data, that I have captured the spirit of the participants’ contributions.

Mauthner and Doucet (1998) discuss the interdependent and ever-evolving nature of the research enterprise in their discussion of qualitative work. Their central point is that to focus on data analysis as a critical site of decision-making is to ignore the discretion that is exercised throughout the research process. As I have outlined, I had
already made strategic decisions in selecting my sample and designing my interview format. There were countless moments in interviews when I made decisions about the comments that I wanted to pursue and those that I did not want to explore. By the time that I began to code the data, I had already made many choices that had shaped the data. It is also important to remember that just as I was making decisions, so too were the participants as they offered some experiences and not others. I tried to be attentive to my power in guiding the research process and interpreting the data as I provided participants with several opportunities to validate the transcripts.

*Thematic Coding*

There were a number of models that I found useful as I developed my research design and subsequently prepared for my analysis. Neuman (1997) observes that “instead of a simple clerical task, qualitative coding is an integral part of data analysis. It is guided by the research question and leads to new questions... Coding is two simultaneous activities: mechanical data reduction and analytic categorization of data” (p. 422).

I grounded my analysis in Strauss’ (1987) three-tiered model of qualitative data coding which uses open-coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In this model “the researcher reviews the data on three occasions, using different coding each time, and codes the same raw data in three passes” (p. 422). The first level of analysis is open coding. During this stage I began to classify the data using preliminary labels and different coloured highlighters. At this point in the process the themes were fairly broad and were derived from my research question, my theoretical framework, the language of participants, and ideas that were developed through engagement with the data (Strauss,
Neuman (1997) notes that "regardless of whether he or she begins with a list of themes, a researcher makes a list of themes after coding. Such a list serves three purposes: 1) It helps the researcher see the emerging themes at a glance. 2) It stimulates the researcher to find themes in future open coding. 3) The researcher uses the list to build a universe of all themes in the study, which he or she reorganizes, sorts, combines, discards, or extends in further analysis" [emphasis in the original] (p. 423).

In terms of the unit of analysis, I tended to code larger chunks of data and I believe this approach allowed me to respect the flow of conversation in the interviews and maintain the integrity of the contributions. My categories of analysis after the first pass were philosophy, practice, citizenship, resistance, and community.

In the first stage of open coding I dealt with codes as broad themes that were relatively simple categories representing incredibly complex sets of data. In the second stage, axial coding, I re-examined my initial codes and looked for ways to structure these categories to demonstrate their interconnectedness. Most critical was my effort to find a core organizing theme around which the others revolved. This organizational approach emphasized the beginnings of theoretical coherence (Neuman, 1997) and provided a solid foundation for my next pass. Miles and Huberman (1994) highlight the significance of this stage, noting that "whether codes are created and revised early or late is basically less important than whether they have some conceptual and structural order. Codes should relate to one another in coherent, study-important ways; they should be part of a governing structure" (p. 62).

Neuman (1997) notes that during axial coding, a researcher asks about causes and consequences, conditions and interactions, strategies and processes, and looks for categories or concepts
that cluster together.... Axial coding stimulates thinking about linkages between concepts or themes, and it raises new questions. It can suggest dropping some themes or examining others in more depth. In addition, it reinforces the connections between evidence and concepts. As a researcher consolidates codes and locates evidences [sic], he or she finds evidence in many places for core themes and builds a dense web of support in the qualitative data for them. This is analogous to the idea of multiple indicators described with regard to reliability and measuring variables. The connection between a theme and data is strengthened by multiple instances of empirical evidence. (pp. 423-424)

At this point in my analysis, my data categories and sub-categories had begun to coalesce around my theoretical framework, emphasizing the translation of a philosophical commitment to critical pedagogy into classroom practice. My categories and sub-categories of analysis were: (a) educating for citizenship; (b) context (the university, communities); (c) voice (silence, listening, pluralism); (d) safety and risk (public and private divide, place of the heart, teacher-as-text, activism); (e) power (resistance, student-centred learning, audience); (f) role of teacher (philosophy, curriculum).

The third and final stage described by Strauss (1987) is selective coding and generally takes place after all the data has been collected and key themes have been identified. At this point I used my research questions and theoretical framework to reorganize the themes that I had identified in the second stage. My primary focus at this stage was on organization of the themes and sub-themes using a re-coding of the data based on these broader categories. As happened in the second stage, some data points began to take centre stage while others faded into the background. This reorganization resulted in three primary categories and numerous sub-categories of data that I referred to as (a) perspective on theory (the university as a site for citizenship education, defining educating for citizenship); (b) perspective on self (curriculum as contested space, teacher's role, self-reflective practice, solidarity through difference); and, (c) perspective
on other (voice, silence, listening, embodiment of learning, pluralism, safety and risk, power).

Obviously these categories are not mutually exclusive; however, this framing of the data seemed to be getting closer to providing an effective vehicle to engage with my theoretical questions. In addition, this approach seemed to capture some of the spirit of the text offered by participants that is often lost as researchers carve up our text into manageable chunks of data.

It was clear throughout the interviews that the ideas associated with educating for citizenship prompted comments regarding the intersectionality of sexuality, race, class, ability and gender. My focus on sexuality was not meant to elevate one of these aspects as more important than another (Cuádraz & Uttal, 1999); instead, it was meant to highlight that sexuality provides some different challenges for the critical educator.

In any of these three stages I could have developed a category around sexuality; however, I made a strategic decision to integrate that important theme in the other categories, as it seemed to be one of the threads that was woven throughout the interviews and the subsequent analysis.

My Role

Mauthner and Doucet (1998) observe that

The data analysis stage can be viewed as a deeply disempowering one in which our respondents have little or no control. Far removed from our respondents, we make choices and decisions about their lives; which particular issues to focus on in the analysis; how to interpret their words; and which extracts to select for quotation. We dissect, cut up, distil and reduce their accounts, thereby losing much of the complexities, subtleties and depth of their narratives. . . . We categorize their words into overarching themes, and as we do so, the discrete, separate and different individuals we interviewed are gradually lost. (p. 138)
Throughout this process I have been cognizant of how the dynamics of my conversations with participants resulted in more detailed and intimate revelations occurring later in the first interview or in the second interview. While unavoidable, those dynamics of sharing were lost to some degree as I began to code the data. Fortunately, the eloquence of participants’ contributions meant that the context of their comments remained intact; however, the less tangible quality of vulnerability was not as evident. A researcher has tremendous power and responsibility in coding and presenting data, and I tried to be very attentive to the decisions that I was making in order to be respectful of the informal and very candid approach participants took in this process.

As I mentioned, I was not concerned with Mauthner and Doucet’s (1998) warning about distancing participants from the product, as I felt that I had a feedback loop that ensured their involvement. However, as suggested by Mauthner and Doucet (1998), there is the risk of unintentionally lessening the import of their stories by presenting their insights in thematic excerpts that are decontextualized from our overall conversation. While I am confident that I have captured the essence and flow of their contributions, it is important for me to talk briefly about how my location shaped my engagement with the data.

Neuman (1997) notes that “a qualitative researcher takes advantage of personal insight, feelings, and perspectives as a human being to understand the social life under study, but is aware of his or her values or assumptions” (p. 334). Given my attention to power throughout this dissertation, it is important to acknowledge the power relations that were inherent in all aspects of this study. A primary lens through which I engaged with my participants and the data was as an educator, and this identity had a number of
different layers. First, I was acutely aware of how my role as a colleague shifted with each participant. As a university instructor, I was a colleague of every participant in the sense that we are all educators, and it was only in the case of Dean Klawe that I felt there was a substantial difference in perspective based on professional rank. Other than that aspect, it seemed to me that the participants and I were peers at different stages of our respective careers. With the exception of one of the interviews, there seemed to be a reciprocity in our conversations that was grounded in some shared experiences and enthusiasm for the research questions.

The ideas associated with studying up and studying sideways are not unidimensional. There are many layers to the assessment of the power relations embedded in these relationships. For example, while I felt like a peer of nine of the ten participants because of our roles as educators committed to educating for citizenship, I was clearly studying up in the sense that I was a doctoral candidate who was reliant on their participation to complete my study. Overall, my participants were very responsive to my requests for interviews and focus group participation. However, the inability of Jo-ann to participate in a second interview did raise the issue of power insofar as my role as a student researcher offered me a limited set of responses to her withdrawal from further interviews.

Another aspect to studying up was my inclusion of Deirdre in my sample. Clearly there are power dynamics in play in any supervisor-student relationship. Deirdre’s collaborative and respectful approach to our conversations, within and outside the interview process, lessened the magnitude of these factors; however, her involvement in the sample raised some interesting issues. I interviewed Deirdre first and used her as a
test run for my interview questions. After that interview, Deirdre and I de-briefed on my approach and she made some suggestions that improved my subsequent interviews. These suggestions dealt primarily with making my content more accessible to participants who were not teaching in the area of critical pedagogy. In the one case that I considered myself “studying up” due to professional rank, Dean Klawe was incredibly generous with her time and insightfully candid in her remarks.

A second layer of my role as an educator was my shared experience with a key theme in the interviews. The majority of the participants discussed concerns about conflicts or difficult teaching moments that arose in relation to talking about sexuality. I have experienced the same types of tense moments and have felt that unlike racism or sexism, there seems to be a certain permission associated with heterosexist or homophobic views expressed in the classroom. Efforts to ground these views in legitimate differences in morality seem to make challenges to these types of ignorant or bigoted remarks more contentious. That is not to say that participants did not explore race and gender, but there seemed to be some consensus that sexuality presented a different set of challenges.

Another key aspect to my identity that intersects with my role as an educator is that I am a lesbian. Being gay obviously connects with classroom discussions of sexuality and also to my personal need to elevate the importance of activism in the classroom. Edwards and Ribbens (1998) discuss the tensions inherent in the researcher’s role when one is exploring private or personal issues, noting that “we may thus shift uneasily between the position of participant and observer/listener, constantly reflecting upon how we know about things, and how to view the knowledge we produce” (p. 2). I
think this observation is very relevant to my work, given the theme of sexuality that surfaced and more broadly the very personal nature of teaching. While it was not by design, the three years that passed between the collection of the data and the completion of this dissertation allowed me to engage on a very practical level with the data. I was constantly reflecting on how my interests and philosophy shaped my curricular choices and how my experiences shaped my responses to discussions of activism.

There are four key areas that demonstrate this relationship between my practice and this study. First, my understanding of silence has been fundamentally changed as I have begun to appreciate the multidimensional aspects of silence. I have altered my curriculum and evaluation strategies to include journals and reflections on participation that include silence as an aspect of classroom experience. Second, I have made sexuality a key theme in my fourth year course on social policy analysis. Students are required to engage in the reality of homophobia and heterosexism by reading and journaling about Cleve Jones' *Stitching a Revolution: The Making of an Activist* (2000). Students’ analysis of the text and their journals must examine the situatedness of the activism and resistance captured in the book.

Third, I have encouraged students to engage in social activism in real and more contrived settings through assignments that include letters to the editor and to politicians (that must be sent); participation in public meetings, protests and marches; and, theatrical presentations to mock public policy juries. Fourth, I have changed how I engage with expressions of heterosexism and homophobia in my courses and in the guest lectures I do.

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5 *Stitching a Revolution: The Making of an Activist* describes how Cleve Jones conceived of and pursued the vision that became the AIDS Memorial Quilt. Jones' personal account details the multiple forms of resistance and activism that characterize the political activities of policy entrepreneurs.
on lesbian parenting. I try not to contribute to my own marginalization by providing space for the bigotry that fuels anti-gay remarks, particularly when these comments are couched in religious claims. I have found Petrovic’s (1998, 1999) discussion of moralistic stands (MS) and moral democratic stands (MDS) to be very useful in addressing the claims to free speech that are invoked in defense of these discriminatory positions. This framework of recognition and anti-oppression informs my pedagogy as I proactively and reactively engage with heterosexist, racist and sexist viewpoints.

The Theory/Data Dance

There are a number of researchers who discuss the need to examine the everyday experiences of people in some detail to enable a more complex understanding of some theoretical phenomena. My work is grounded in this approach as I was focused on the detailed accounts of pedagogical encounters that might contribute to my understanding of educating for citizenship through the development of reflective solidarity and ultimately reflective accountability.

Throughout this study I have engaged in the theory/data relationship on two levels. First, I have drawn on this research as my own practice has changed over time. Second, the data in this study were being used to explore theoretical assertions of a model that had not been employed in the setting under study. In this regard, I have found Neuman’s discussion of first, second and third order interpretations to be particularly instructive. Neuman (1997) observes that

A qualitative researcher interprets data by giving them meaning, translating them, or making them understandable. However, the meaning he or she gives begins with the point of view of the people being studied. He or she interprets data by finding out how the people being studied see the world, how they define the situation, or what it means for them. . . . The people who created the social
behaviour have personal reasons or motives for their actions. This is first order interpretation. A researcher’s discovery and reconstruction of this first order interpretation is a second order interpretation, because the researcher comes in from the outside to discover what occurred. In a second-order interpretation, the researcher elicits an underlying coherence or sense of meaning in the data. . . . A researcher who adopts a strict interpretive approach may stop at a second-order interpretation that is, once he or she understands the significance of the action for the people being studied. Many qualitative researchers go further to generalize or link the second-order interpretation to general theory. They move to a broader level of interpretation, or third-order interpretation, where a researcher assigns general theoretical significance. [emphasis in the original] (Neuman, 1997, p. 335)

Neuman’s (1997) discussion of the dynamic relationship between theory and data is useful as it highlights the layered and complex nature of the process. It also reminds the reader that higher levels of analysis (i.e. 3rd order interpretation) are not necessarily better, and researchers must choose the level of interpretation based on their research questions and data.

In my project, my research questions as they related to the usefulness of Dean’s concept of reflective solidarity in the discussion of educating for citizenship necessitated a third-order interpretation. I wanted to see how Dean’s (1996) political theory regarding conflict and solidarity might inform my analysis of the participants’ philosophy of education and classroom practice aimed at increasing civic participation. I have tried to weave together the voices of the participants, the literature, and my own voice throughout my dissertation in an effort to move the conversation regarding educating for citizenship forward.

**Conclusion**

I have tried to approach the study of educating for citizenship in a way that provides the greatest opportunity to contribute to this discussion. I have selected
participants who have thought about some of the issues associated with more critical pedagogical approaches. I have used a design that tries to maximize the input of participants through multiple interviews, a focus group and different opportunities to review my use of their comments. I have tried to be transparent and strategic in my decisions about data coding and the relationship between the data and my theoretical framework. Finally, I have tried to breathe life into my examination of how reflective solidarity contributes to a conversation about educating for citizenship in the university by relying on the rich experiences of the participants.

In her discussion of feminist research methodologies, Reinharz (1992) notes that

Agreement does not even exist about how to refer to an interview and an interviewee. Is an interview a conversation? Is the interviewee a participant? A subject? An informant? This variety reflects the fact that feminist research methods are both rooted in the mainstream disciplines and represent a protest against them. Using unconventional terms such as ‘participant’ instead of ‘subject’ is a signal that the researcher is operating in a feminist framework that includes the power to name or rename. Eschewing standardization in format allows the research question, not the method, to drive the project forward. It has also encouraged creativity. (p. 22)

It is in the spirit of creativity that I have tried to integrate my theoretical framework, my research questions and my participants’ voices in a way that adds to the conversation about educating for citizenship.
Chapter III
Thinking about Citizenship Using Reflective Solidarity

It is impossible to discuss educating for citizenship without examining the concept of citizenship. It is equally impossible to examine citizenship to discover some singular all-inclusive meaning. Instead my goal in this chapter is twofold. First, I examine some of the theoretical debates regarding citizenship, which are primarily housed within the political philosophy literature. This discussion will document my journey to Dean’s (1996) work on reflective solidarity as a useful framework to examine the idea and practice of educating for citizenship within a university context. Second, I introduce the conceptual underpinnings of the practice of educating for citizenship that are explored throughout the dissertation. Third, I introduce homophobia, which Fone (2000) refers to as the “last acceptable prejudice," as an interesting and provocative test for Dean’s concept of reflective solidarity. The primary reason for using sexuality as a theme is that classroom discussions of sexuality and expressions of heterosexism and homophobia were raised by participants repeatedly as a site of resistance and tremendous challenge pedagogically.

The most common points of contention in discussions of citizenship revolve around ideas of a good citizen (Mouffe, 1993), types of citizenship (Dahrendorf, 1994; Dietz, 1992; Fraser and Gordon, 1994; Gabriel, 1996; James, 1992; Mouffe, 1993; Stone, 1996; Turner, 1992; Turner, 1994; van Gunsteren, 1994; van Steenbergen, 1994), a common good (Fraser, 1997b), democracy (Bickford, 1996; Fraser, 1997b; Young, 1996, 1997, 2000), equality and difference (Bock, 1992), essentialism (Mouffe, 1993), the public/private divide (Fraser, 1992; Honig, 1992; Passerin d’Entrèves, 1992), listening
(Bickford, 1996; Young, 1990a), and public commitment (Lichterman, 1995).

Although my thesis is not focused on political philosophy, it is grounded in this literature. Therefore, the journey that I am about to take you on is not meant to be exhaustive, nor is it meant to engage extensively in weighing the legitimacy of all of the arguments. Instead, the purpose of this chapter is to provide a context within which I argue that Dean’s concept of reflective solidarity is an interesting extension of the important work done by such theorists as Chantal Mouffe, Iris Marion Young, and Nancy Fraser, who in turn extend the work of theorists such as Jürgen Habermas. In particular, Dean’s discussion of the communicative we, *discursive universalism*, and the situated, hypothetical third provide a useful framework to examine my findings on educating for citizenship. It is with these goals in mind that I begin this exploration of what citizenship means.

*Defining Citizenship: Our Responsibility to One Another in a Democratic Society*

Gabriel (1996) notes that

Citizenship claims are made and contested on the basis of three specific and related axes. The first of these centres on who belongs to and who is excluded from a particular community. Historically, various attempts have been made to restrict citizenship to certain groups and to exclude other groups entirely. The second and related axis of citizenship is a reciprocal notion of the rights and entitlements of the individual and, by corollary, the scope and nature of these social goods. The final axis is defined by questions of how these rights become a meaningful reality in practice. (pp. 175-176)

Gabriel’s typology is an important one to begin with because it highlights one of the most common sets of questions or issues that people have raised about my dissertation: which layer of citizenship am I interested in? While all three axes are interdependent, it is the first and third axes that are most relevant for me. The first axis
emphasizes exclusion and is important because of my discussion of pedagogical choices and practices that further marginalize or exclude individuals and groups. The third axis is instructive because it acknowledges that, while legal recognition of individual citizenship is important, legal entrenchment of rights should not be equated with the institutional and individual acknowledgement of those rights. While this typology is helpful, it is important to examine the limitations of the use of these categories because they provide a very narrow understanding of the potential for citizenship discussions. While I acknowledge the importance of the legal rights discourse, my interest in citizenship extends beyond the legal discussions of citizenship to the more social and political dimensions of the concept.

Bickford's (1996) discussion of citizenship reminds readers of the taken-for-grantedness of these legalistic conceptions of citizenship. Too often citizenship is thought of as a nationalistic, state proffered status that shapes citizens' consciousness regarding rights and responsibilities to vote, pay taxes, be law-abiding and travel abroad with the designation of citizen of a country. Instead of this rather static and sterile notion of citizenship, Bickford challenges us to think about citizenship as fluid, dynamic, imbuied with differential access to power, and characterized by marginalization of certain individuals and groups at certain times. This conception of citizenship is important as I begin to talk about educating for social activism because of the relationship between individuals’ identities and the targets of their activism.

Before looking at some of the more contemporary discussions of citizenship, it is important to reflect on one of the most often cited works in this area, the work of Marshall. In his classic essay on Citizenship and Social Class he talks about three types
of citizenship: civil citizenship, political citizenship, and social citizenship. Despite Marshall’s traditional view of the social as emphasizing economic security, there is still a very obvious shift from a more political definition in civil citizenship to one that is characterized by a more communal orientation in social citizenship. This latter orientation encourages sacrificing individual interests for the public good (van Steenbergen, 1994). Marshall’s work moves from an exclusive focus on individual rights, which was embodied in his definition of civil citizenship, to a more participatory, albeit individualistic, model embodied in political citizenship, finally to social citizenship emphasizing social support (van Steenbergen, 1994). Turner (1992) examines Marshall’s typology and challenges: (a) the evolutionary qualities of his development of citizenship, (b) the absence of a critical analysis of the power differentials that impact access to the rights that are assumed by theory, (c) and “the historical emergence of citizenship as an irreversible process within contemporary society” (p. 37). Turner argues that we need to pay much more attention to the dynamics of struggle that characterize differences in race, class, sexuality and ability that are embedded in any definitional discussions of citizenship. I think this critique’s emphasis on power differentials is particularly important in terms of education as a site for that struggle. How does the university support or impede this struggle? How do individual professors contribute to an atmosphere within which this struggle takes place? How do students navigate these conflicts?

Related to Turner’s critique of Marshall is Fraser and Gordon’s (1994) examination of an interesting perceived tension between civil citizenship and social citizenship. They argue that “the expression ‘social citizenship’ evokes themes from
three major traditions of political theory: liberal themes of (social) rights and equal respect; communitarian norms of solidarity and shared responsibility; and republican ideals of participation in public life (through use of 'public goods' and 'public services')” (pp. 90-91). Fraser and Gordon (1994) argue that the terms social and public have taken on negative meanings leading to “a cultural tendency to focus on two, rather extreme, forms of human relationship: discrete contractual exchanges of equivalents, on the one hand, and un reciprocated, unilateral charity, on the other” (p. 91). We are living in a time when the political landscape in North America is characterized by various federal, regional and local governments making crucial public policy decisions regarding the state’s and our own responsibilities to fellow citizens. Fraser and Gordon (1994) stress that when the celebration and fierce protection of individual freedoms in the name of democracy is lifted above the economic well-being of individual citizens it is impossible to have democracy because of the social devastation that our skewed priorities have reaped. This understanding of the construction of the social is important to the practice of educating for citizenship that I am talking about. This emphasis on individual rights over more community-oriented obligations permeates every aspect of our society, including the university classroom. The resistance of many of my students to discussions about the marginalization of certain groups is fueled by the primacy of the individual rights-based discourse.

An extension of this focus on individualism, which is particularly salient in the Canadian context, is the emphasis on employment as a marker of citizenship. Since the mid-1990s, the most serious threat to social citizenship (and indeed to more critical approaches to education that will be discussed later) has been the translation of
democratic participation to mean labour force participation. This new focus is part of a more expansive neo-liberal shift from citizens to consumers that has penetrated our social, legal, political and educational institutions (Broad & Antony, 1999).

Dietz (1992) explores a more progressive construction of citizenship by examining liberal, Marxist and maternalist conceptions of citizenship. Describing the liberal model, Dietz notes the emphasis on formal rights of equality, freedom, and liberty and highlights the inadequacy of this perspective, despite its laudable goals, because it does not interrogate power differences and their effect on access to equality. Extending this critique of liberalism, James (1992) argues that liberal conceptions of citizenship, because of their reliance on male norms of impartiality, objectivity and stoicism, excluded women. In fact, the liberalist attention to the guarantees of equality embedded in the infrastructure of the process as opposed to looking to a more intimate understanding of citizenship encourages what James calls the “good-enough citizen of liberalism . . . [who] is by no means obliged to participate in political life” (p. 51). The acknowledgment of this minimalist approach to participation in civic life is essential as I examine some of the pedagogical challenges associated with teaching for citizenship. In its attention to equality and the universalist assumptions that are too often embedded in constructions of inequality, liberalism recognizes difference “not as something that is politically valuable in itself, but as something that is politically relevant because it threatens the equal independence of citizens” (James, 1992, p. 52). Liberal calls for a more humanist understanding of our struggles that does not further divide individuals and groups are illustrated in my discussion of student resistance as a barrier to conceptualizing Dean’s situated, hypothetical third.
While Dietz (1992) acknowledges that the Marxist model deals more effectively with issues of oppression and power than the Liberal model, she reiterates a common criticism of Marxist models of social action: it is not enough to look to a “solution” that centres on overthrowing capitalism. The Maternalist perspective is reminiscent of the position taken by many first wave feminists in terms of emphasizing women’s political contribution as residing in the private sphere but necessitating a (re)valuing of that sphere, particularly the activities of mothering. Beyond these frameworks (liberalism, Marxism, maternalism), Dietz (1992) advocates that “a feminist commitment to democratic citizenship . . . must be conceived of as a continuous activity and a good in itself, not as a momentary engagement (or a socialist revolution) with an eye to a final goal or a societal arrangement” (pp. 76-77).

Many theorists have challenged liberal notions of citizenship that predicated their models on a global or universal understanding of citizenship and often emphasized economic class as the barrier to full citizenship and therefore the focus for reform (Gabriel, 1996). These universal assumptions are highlighted by Gabriel (1996) when she notes that the dominant society’s tendency to categorize others as “‘specialized-needs groups’ and ‘minorities’ underscores the assimilationist ideal embodied within social citizenship more generally” (p. 176). Traditional interpretations of equality to mean sameness reinforce the idea that commonality is appealing to a public that relies heavily on principles of a greater good, a common good and majority rules. Challenging these universal conceptions of citizenship, Gabriel (1996) differentiates between cultural pluralism and structural pluralism as alternative conceptions of citizenship. In some ways I think the primary difference between these two concepts parallels the distinction
between multicultural education and anti-racist education. Cultural pluralism like multiculturalism embraces and celebrates cultural difference as an integral part of society. Structural pluralism emphasizes that respect for diversity can only be truly realized through institutional reforms (education, health, law) to provide individuals' and groups' equitable access to political equality. In an effort to bridge these two concepts, Dahrendorf (1994) argues that "the true test of the strength of citizenship rights is heterogeneity. Common respect for basic entitlements among people who are different in origin, culture and creed proves that combination of identity and variety which lies at the heart of civil and civilized societies" (p. 17).

Building on these challenges to liberal models of citizenship, Mouffe's (1992b) discussion of the radical democratic citizen highlights both the inadequacies and strengths of liberal and civic republican views of citizenship. While equality and liberty are important to citizenship, liberalism has constructed these ideas in an exclusionary and insulated fashion that does not take into account the multiple subject positions of those who need to access these rights. Mouffe (1992a) argues that "ideas of public-mindedness, civic activity and political participation in a community of equals are alien to most liberal thinkers" (p. 227). The individual interest of citizens that is emphasized in the liberal perspective is challenged by civic republicanism that emphasizes community and a sense of a common good. Mouffe rightly points out that a singular concept of the common good is equally problematic; however, her challenge to it emphasizes our inability to achieve it as opposed to an inability to define it, which I think is a more instructive critique. I take up this latter point as I use Dean's reflective solidarity as a framework to negotiate the multiple interests that problematize the idea of a common
good. Mouffe’s (1992a) concept of a radical democratic citizen emphasizes participation and the need to construct “the social agent not as a unitary subject but as the articulation of an ensemble of subject positions, constructed within specific discourses and always precariously and temporarily sutured at the intersection of those subject positions” (p. 237).

Just as there are many different models of citizenship, there are also many definitions and understandings of democracy within which citizenship is practiced. Theorists such as Mansbridge describe the Aristotelian view of politics and democracy as unitary democracy, which emphasizes decision-making through consensus and deliberation that is characterized by friendship and respect (cited in Bickford, 1996). This model is usually contrasted with the concept of an adversary democracy, which, as the name suggests, is characterized by conflicting interests and a focus on ensuring that rights are protected during this conflict. The majority’s will as opposed to consensus is the strategy used in decision making (Bickford, 1996). It is likely that democracies embody both of these dynamics to a greater or lesser extent.

Fraser (1997a) examines the layered nature of visions of democracy by asking whether democracy refers simply to an Aristotelian participatory model of decision-making involving all citizens. Fraser (1997a) questions the complexities that are embedded in this relatively simple inquiry. In particular she explores the debate surrounding equality and difference and proposes that both anti-essentialist and multicultural efforts to respond to the tensions inherent in this dichotomy are problematic. I found Fraser’s critique of the pluralism embedded in multiculturalism particularly instructive as I reflected on discussions about gay and lesbian issues in the classroom.
She argues that this pluralism results in a predominantly uncritical discussion of difference without contextualizing the issues of power and domination that are embedded in many of these differences. In response to these problems, Fraser (1997a) suggests an approach that moves us from a discussion of differences between women that almost exclusively emphasizes gender, toward a conversation that draws its power from a recognition of multiple and intersecting differences. However, as we embark on this antiessentialist path, it is critical that we do not fall into the trap of remaining in the deconstructionist mindset that does not promote an alternative vision. Finally, Fraser (1997a) argues that

There is no going back to the monocultural view that there is only one valuable way of being human. The multicultural view of a multiplicity of cultural forms represents an unsurpassable gain. But this does not mean that we should subscribe to the pluralist version of multiculturalism. Rather, we should develop an alternative version that permits us to make normative judgments about the value of different differences by interrogating their relation to inequality. (p. 108)

I contend that this evaluation of difference is a critical consideration as educators reflect on how to navigate the contentious and conflict-laden waters of gay and lesbian issues and is particularly interesting because it is double-edged. On the one hand, this logic of normative assessment has been and will continue to be invoked as individuals and groups attempt to construct a hierarchy of inequality. On the other hand, discrimination against lesbians and gay men is not any more important than discrimination against aboriginals or other groups; however, at this point in history it is substantially and contextually different. I am a member of a group that does not enjoy some of the basic legal rights of other Canadians, such as the right to marry my lover, the right to make medical decisions for my partner and, in most provinces, the right to adopt children. At the same time that these legal barriers continue to exist, I believe that
sexuality is one of the last bastions for bigots as they are continuously excusing themselves and being excused by others as “having the right to their opinions” and demanding that society “should recognize that this is a moral question and not one of human rights.” Given that we do not feel compelled to find this space for racists or sexists, I believe it is this claim to morality, no matter how narrowly it is defined, that seems to explain this difference in treatment in some of our legal, social and educational institutions.

The ability to differentiate and ultimately support this type of bigotry became very evident when my partner and I held a family blessing in honour of the birth of our first child. My family is incredibly loving and accepting of who I am; however, this was the most formal celebration of our relationship that we had ever had. An interesting thing happened amongst all of the celebratory hugs and kisses: my fifteen-year-old nephew did not come. Although I had sat with him and talked about the importance of this ceremony, he did not come. No one in my family “got” the meaning of his absence. They offered excuses: “he’s young,” “he came later,” “he’s more uncomfortable with your sexuality because of his age and the fact that he’s dealing with his own stuff.” If, as a white woman, I were marrying a black man and my nephew chose not to attend “because he was uncomfortable,” my family would have been embarrassed and outraged by his prejudice, and my guess is that he would have been there despite his displeasure. Our family blessing was not seen as having the same prestige or importance and therefore there was not the compulsion to attend, and secondly, his bigotry was implicitly supported by my family through their silence or requests that we “take the higher ground.”
Our experience illustrates Fraser's (1997b) discussion of normative judgements about various differences and raises the exercise of valuing, which is embedded in any discussion of citizenship. One of the ways that it is invoked is by discussions of societal good. Bickford (1996) argues that Habermas's discussion of societal consensus "is about norms of action, substantive judgements of the good life" (p. 18), which raises the obvious question, what is the good life or, more broadly, what is the common good? Even the Aristotelian perspective that emphasizes means as opposed to ends is challenged by this demand for consensus in that "if a citizenry agrees that one of its ends is justice, they do not simply deliberate about ways to reach a given state of justice, but about what would count as having acted justly" (Bickford, 1996, p. 28).

This question of common good or consensus, even on operating principles such as equality or justice, immediately raises interesting questions with respect to social change and more specifically teaching for social change. How do we teach in ways that promote social change? What do we mean by change? Change from what to what? Bickford (1996) enters this debate by arguing that "politics is not simply about shared interests or shared conceptions of the good; it is how we decide what to do in the face of conflict about all these things. Politics in this sense is constituted neither by consensus nor community, but by the practices through which citizens argue about interests and ends—in other words, by communication" (p. 11). But does this commitment to argue or talk imply that we always have to listen? Bickford notes that differences in power characterize this communication, and that too often these differences are not recognized in any practical manner that serves to enhance marginalized groups' participation in these conversations. These differences in power are embedded in access to the spheres within
which the conversations are occurring, the language that is being privileged, and the setting of the agenda (i.e., are the issues of interest even being discussed?). In other words, power differences influence the likelihood of listening.

My point is that I agree with Fraser’s (1997a) argument that there has to be a more rigorous interrogation of the validity of various claims of difference as each holds very different relationships to inequality. In just such an interrogation, Young (1990a) argues that when difference is recognized, it is done in relation to sets of norms that frame difference—that is, different from what? Young argues that the consequences of Othering using these normative yardsticks include the marginalization of certain individuals and groups and their interests. In order to remedy the discrimination that these ruling norms perpetuate, Chamallas (1993) argues that Young “wants to displace an exclusionary meaning of difference with an emancipatory meaning of difference, taking her cue from the many oppressed groups who have already taken the ‘turn to difference’—for example, black power, gay/lesbian pride, separatist feminism” (cited in Chamallas, 1993, p. 681).

Chamallas (1993) argues that Minow uses the idea of the dilemma of difference to talk about the reality whereby “both neutral strategies that ignore difference and special treatment strategies that explicitly acknowledge difference backfire and curiously end up reinforcing or recreating the stigma of being different” (cited in Chamallas, 1993, p. 679). The resolution to this dilemma is “a relational conception of difference that challenges the prevailing view of difference as some intrinsic and objective quality of certain groups” (p. 679). Both Minow and Young advocate a rethinking of difference to make it a focus of discussions of democracy as opposed to a dimension that needs to be
neutralized (Chamallas, 1993). Chamallas (1993) argues that “like Minow, Young hopes that a new positive understanding of difference will mark a radical break with the naturalizing discourses that deposit difference within the bodies of ‘different’ people. She also has confidence that the meaning of group identity could be transformed if social group membership were thought of as arising from relationships of affinity and social processes rather than from common essences” (p. 82).

Stone’s (1996) discussion of the various stages of feminist theory since the 1960s provides a very tight description of the shift in emphasis from sameness to difference pinpointed by Chamallas (1993). Stone argues that universalist themes focused on men and women being the same promoted a demand for a humanist perspective. Remaining with an emphasis on sameness, essentialists look for base similarities among women. Separatists emphasize differences between women and men and particularist theorists point to differences among men and among women. Bock and James (1992) highlight the problems inherent in the isolationist qualities of the equality/difference debate by noting that in some ways it is an untenable relationship because too often discussions of equality focus on sameness and strive to ignore any differences resulting in a very legalistic construction of equality. However, the contrary view that emphasizes and embraces differences and that supports inequality based on the different needs of different groups raises concerns about the segregating consequences of this emphasis.

Pateman’s (1992) discussion of this debate characterizes this tension between equality and difference as the Wollstonecraft dilemma. Pateman (1992) argues that the dilemma arises because, within the existing patriarchal conception of citizenship, the choice always has to be made between equality and difference, or between equality and womanhood. On the one hand, to demand ‘equality’ is to strive for equality with men (to call for the ‘rights of men and citizens’ to be extended to
women), which means that women must become (like) men. On the other hand, to insist, like some contemporary feminists, that women’s distinctive attributes, capacities and activities be revalued and treated as a contribution to citizenship is to demand the impossible; such ‘difference’ is precisely what patriarchal citizenship excludes. (p. 20)

In her discussion of citizenship Stone (1996) explores gendered conceptions of citizenship and talks about the significance of Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau and Locke’s reliance on rationality as a defining feature of the citizen, thrusting men into the public and relegating women to the private. Stone (1996) sums up this genre of theorizing by noting that “the traditional definition of citizenship and of woman within it, either as inferior, segregated, or invisible is based upon a conception of rationality that is assumed universal: Humans (read man) possess a natural rationality (augmented by education and civic participation)” (p. 44). Various feminist scholars argue that women have been excluded from citizenship discussions because of the assumption that women were not rational beings. Critiques of this characterization of women have oscillated between claims of women’s rationality in traditional terms to assertions that these constructions of the rational citizen need to be infused with emotionality and subjectivity. In other words rationality is gendered. This construction raises the problem of essentialism, which Spelman (1988) and others critique, by demanding that we acknowledge the uniqueness of each woman’s experiences as we try to understand their perspectives by examining our own privilege. It is through this process that society will become more tolerant. Spelman’s analysis highlights the question of what our expectations can be with respect to tolerance versus acceptance versus celebration. Is our goal to understand others so that we may be more tolerant? Is tolerance the minimum we should expect of our fellow citizens or should we be expecting a much more complex and intimate engagement with
difference that would support a more celebratory recognition of diversity? Our answers to these questions are dependent upon the social and political context within which we live, work and advocate for change. My arguments in this dissertation are firmly situated in a climate characterized by appreciation and celebration of difference; however, I recognize that in some communities and some parts of the world tolerance would be a tremendous victory.

Pateman (1992) notes that Scott expounds on the dilemma of difference by noting that “when equality and difference are paired dichotomously, they structure an impossible choice. If one opts for equality, one is forced to accept the notion that difference is antithetical to it. If one opts for difference, one admits that equality is unattainable” (p. 17). I find it interesting that in my own teaching and in my interviews some resistance on the part of students takes the form of highlighting these perceived inconsistencies in feminist positions. Of course there are divergent views and to some extent feminists have been pushed into this dichotomy because of the way in which citizenship discussions have been framed in the past.

For instance, Pateman’s (1992) response to this dilemma is problematic because of her essentialist assumptions about mothering and what it means to be a woman. In her critique, Mouffe (1992b) contends that “the problem according to [Pateman] is that the category of the ‘individual,’ while based on the male model, is presented as the universal form of individuality. Feminists must uncover that false universality by asserting the existence of two sexually differentiated forms of universality; this is the only way to resolve the ‘Wollstonecraft dilemma’ and to break free from the patriarchal alternatives of ‘othering’ and ‘saming’” (pp. 375-376). Mouffe (1992b) supports Pateman’s critique
of the "liberal, male conception of modern citizenship" (p. 377); however, Mouffe (1992b) argues "that what a project of radical and plural democracy needs is not a sexually differentiated model of citizenship in which the specific tasks of both men and women would be valued equally, but a truly different conception of what it is to be a citizen and to act as a member of a democratic political community" (p. 377).

In an effort to avoid replacing one flawed dichotomy with another, Young's (1990a) exploration of social justice and oppression acknowledges the shift away from the equality-difference dichotomy but continues to emphasize the importance of difference in understanding participation in civic life. Young argues that "social justice . . . requires not the melting away of difference, but institutions that promote reproduction of and respect for group differences without oppression" (1990a, p. 47).

Young deals with both equality and difference in her discussion of differentiated citizenship. She notes that "in a society where some groups are privileged while others are oppressed, insisting that as citizens, persons should leave behind their particular affiliations and experiences to adopt a general point of view, serves only to reinforce that privilege, for the perspectives and interests of the privileged will tend to dominate this unified public, marginalizing or silencing those of other groups" (Young, 1990b, p. 120).

Young's point is not evident in Dean's (1996) discussion of reflective solidarity as there does not seem to be any meaningful acknowledgement that some individuals and groups are more likely to participate in the type of critical exchanges that Dean explores. This dilemma of access has many layers when the university is the site of reflective solidarity.

Young's idea of group membership has been criticized by many theorists (Fraser, 1997b; Mouffe, 1992b). Epstein's (1987) exploration of a gay identity is important for
my discussion as it illustrates the type of criticisms that have been leveled at Young’s emphasis on group difference and as it explores the legitimacy of using a broad category of homosexuality as a group in the citizenship literature. Epstein (1987) argues that

It is worth noting a peculiar paradox of identity politics: while affirming a distinctive group identity that legitimately differs from the larger society, this form of political expression simultaneously imposes a ‘totalizing’ sameness within the group: it says, this is who we ‘really are.’ A greater appreciation for internal diversity—on racial, gender, class, and even sexual dimensions—is a prerequisite if the gay movement is to move beyond ‘ethnic’ insularity and join with other progressive causes. (p. 48)

I think Young’s (2000) effort to define identity politics and differentiate it from a broader politics of difference is important to this discussion as she responds to the type of concern raised by Epstein (1987) regarding the potential limitations of identity politics. Young frames her analysis as a response to critics who use identity politics as a mechanism to silence debate about real, tangible inequalities in our society’s infrastructure (e.g. access to adoption and marriage for lesbians and gay men). Young (2000) differentiates between the politics of recognition and the politics of equitable and equal treatment and argues that most positions argued by identity-based political groups are not claims to the recognition of identity as such, but rather claims for fairness, equal opportunity, and political inclusion” (p. 109). My use of the concept of identity politics encompasses both of these forms of political activity unless otherwise specified.

This discussion of citizenship within the context of difference and communication is foundational to my use of reflective solidarity and necessitates that I explore the spheres within which this discourse occurs. The following section examines the public and private divide as it relates to discussions of citizenship and the role of the university in educating for citizenship. This discussion of public and private domains emphasizes
the communicative qualities of political action. It is this emphasis on discourse that provides an introduction to the framework of reflective accountability.

**The Public/Private Domain: What do we get to talk about?**

One of the most obvious places that discussions of difference and citizenship collide is around the public and private divide and the differences in power and privilege that correspond to these spheres. Many theorists have noted that certain groups (e.g. women, disabled persons, lesbians and gay men) have had many of their issues categorized as private and this classification has resulted in critical mechanisms of marginalization being ignored. Arendt’s contributions to the literature in this area have often been challenged by some feminists because of her “rigid and uncompromising public/private distinction... [and] by prohibiting the politicization of issues of social justice and gender” (Honig, 1992, p. 215). However, Honig argues that “it is precisely in Arendt’s rejection of an identity-based politics that her value to feminist politics lies” (p. 216), despite the need for a rethinking of her construction of this divide. Arendt’s discussions of citizenship emphasize “the constitution of public spaces of action and political deliberation... [in an effort to] decide through collective deliberation about matters of common concern” (Passerin d’Entreves, 1992, p. 146). I concur with Honig’s (1992) assessment that Arendt’s rejection of the politicization of the private realm makes her work an unlikely contributor to a feminist conceptualization of citizenship; however, her emphasis on political action through debate, contestation and identification of common concerns within accessible and safe public spaces makes an important contribution to democratic discourse generally and democratic education specifically.

Arendt’s work is important to any participatory framework of citizenship because
of her emphasis on the public sphere as an accessible and often spontaneous venue for the exchange and contestation of ideas and on the idea that this exchange rises above personal interests for the common good of society. Important to my work is Arendt’s belief that it is only through the creation and maintenance of these public spaces that active citizenship will be encouraged. While Arendt certainly did not envision the university or any other social institution as the site for this activity, she argued that democracy requires “schooling citizens in citizenship” (Passerin d’Entrèves, 1992, pp. 161-162). I believe that the university or at least particular sites on campus play an integral role in educating for citizenship. It is within these classrooms that individuals should be able to find their voices and have their views challenged. The activities are fraught with questions of safety and risk-taking which were raised by my participants and to which I will turn in subsequent chapters.

As I mentioned, feminist critics have challenged Arendt’s construction of the public/private divide by arguing that it excludes women from citizenship. However, in her examination of citizenship, Pateman (1992) complicates this critique by noting that women’s physicality has served to exclude them from public civic duty and confined them to private civic responsibility; therefore, it is not as simple as saying that women have been excluded from civic responsibility. In her critique of Habermas, Fraser (1997b) also challenges the argument that women have been excluded by noting that there have always been competing publics and that, indeed, instead of being excluded from public discourse as many feminists have claimed, women have been very active in these “subaltern counter-publics.” It is this idea of counter-publics that is valuable in the exploration of teaching for social change that I will embark on later as I examine some of
the participants’ classrooms as counter-publics.

Fraser (1992) provides some of the most interesting discussions of the public sphere(s) noting that too often the concept of a “public sphere” has been used as a catch-all that “conflates at least three analytically distinct things: the state, the official economy of paid employment, and arenas of public discourse” (Fraser, 1992, p. 110). Fraser contends that Habermas’s concept of the public sphere responds to this unhelpful blurring in that “the public sphere connoted an ideal of unrestricted rational discussion of public matters. The discussion was to be open and accessible to all, merely private interests were to be inadmissible, inequalities of status were to be bracketed, and discussants were to deliberate as peers. The result of such discussion would be public opinion in the strong sense of a consensus about the common good” (1992, pp. 110-111).

The construction and maintenance of public spaces within which a political discourse occurs is essential to the development of a socially and politically active citizenry. Fraser (1992) challenges a number of assumptions that are embedded in what she calls the “bourgeois, masculinist conception of the public sphere” [emphasis in the original] (p. 117), including that it is possible for citizens to enter public discourse as equals, in other words that they are indeed able to bracket their differences. Fraser argues that we need to be much more conscious of the ways that communal politics can co-opt some interests through language and the prioritization of issues. As well, I extend this discussion to ask whether bracketing is desirable. I do not think Dean (1996) has addressed these dynamics in her construction of the situated, hypothetical third as a mechanism to account for the Other. Fraser (1992) also challenges the assumption that a singular public is more conducive to inclusive and productive discourse, arguing instead
multiple publics and particularly alternative publics or subaltern counterpublics provide
"members of subordinated social groups [places to] invent and circulate
counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests,
and needs" (p. 123). Once again imagery from this concept parallels many of the stories
relayed by participants in my study in terms of the construction of their curriculum.
While these multiple publics are applauded by Fraser (1992), she does recognize that
there will be counterpublics formed that may be offensive to many and not move our
communities toward greater equality or some of the other goals related to social justice;
however, she argues that "in general, the proliferation of subaltern counterpublics means
a widening of discursive contestation, and that is a good thing in stratified societies" (p.
124). This particular discussion raises some very interesting questions for me as I wrestle
with how to respond to demands for space to represent heterosexist or indeed
homophobic statements in my classroom. In this dissertation I explore the question of
silence as evidence of both listening and of protest, and I will argue that silencing is
sometimes a strategy to promote the participation of those who have been marginalized in
discussions (e.g., gay men and lesbians in the classroom). This tactic of silencing
students is discussed by participants as a strategy imbued with power and privilege.

In response to challenges that this trend toward fragmentation of interests will
serve to alienate individuals and groups from participating in public debate, Fraser (1992)
argues that indeed participation within these groups will always serve two primary
functions: "on the one hand, they function as spaces of withdrawal and regroupment; on
the other hand, they also function as bases and training grounds for agitational activities
directed toward wider publics" (p. 124). I believe education provides opportunities for
both of these types of activities.

A third assumption that Fraser (1992) challenges is “that discourse in public spheres should be restricted to deliberation about the common good, and that the appearance of private interests and private issues is always undesirable” (p. 128). It is critical to interrogate the distinctions made between what is considered public and private and how public conventions have been unduly and negatively restricted by this artificially constructed dichotomy. Fraser makes the point that if all of the public spheres are working effectively, then there will be opportunities for previously private interests to be brought into the public for discussion and it is only through this discussion that the power to silence through the classification of some issues as private will be negated. Once again the classroom has been a place where challenges to curriculum around sexuality have been made based on the perceived legitimacy of this divide.

Finally, Fraser challenges the need for, or indeed reality of such a clear distinction between the state and broader society. Instead Fraser talks about strong publics and weak publics in terms of access to decision-making and how energetic debate may lead to a strengthening of these previously weak (in terms of access to power) counterpublics. Assuming the existence of these multiple publics, how is citizenship or activism constructed within these spheres of publicity?

In another important discussion of the public/private divide, Young (1990a) argues that “instead of defining the private as what the public excludes, I suggest, the private should be defined, as in one strain of liberal theory, as that aspect of his or her life and activity that any person has a right to exclude others from. The private in this sense is not what public institutions exclude, but what the individual chooses to withdraw from
public view” (pp. 119-120). She argues that a truly “heterogeneous public implies two political principles: (a) no persons, actions, or aspects of a person’s life should be forced into privacy; and (b) no social institutions or practices should be excluded a priori from being a proper subject for public discussion and expression” (p. 120). However, Young notes that this conception of the public is not realized in our communities as we continue to push many individuals and groups into the shadows. An equally important question is whether some perspectives such as hate speech or even other less vitriolic speech should in fact be pushed to the margins. I come back to this question when I discuss the role of power and silence in the classroom.

Young’s (1990a) discussion of the public sphere mandates a participatory model of citizenship that draws attention to Mouffe’s (1993) criticism of liberalism as problematic because of its lack of emphasis on political involvement of citizens. I think this liberal approach is an important source of resistance in universities as critical pedagogy promotes and in some cases demands greater political activism. In support of the potential for educational institutions to play a role in supporting activism, I point to van Gunsteren’s (1994) discussion of the citizen as he argues that “appeals for responsibility and civic-mindedness serve little purpose. Civic-mindedness will not arise, nor develop, by being called for. Civic-mindedness, legitimacy and public support arise as a by-product generated by other activities and events” (p. 40). I agree with this statement and believe that the university plays a vital role as an incubator for social activism and civic-mindedness.

Maria, one of the participants in my study, extends this discussion in her

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6 Hate speech is defined in the Criminal Code of Canada as “communicating statements, other than in private conversation, [which] wilfully promotes hatred against an identifiable group” (s. 319.2).
comments about citizenship:

I think there is a move towards more project-based forms of learning and team-based assessments, which I think is really good because I think the way the world works is generally in groups rather than as individuals. . . . I believe the more that the university can engage the students in taking responsibility, not just for their own learning which is one of the things Martha Piper really stresses, but for the creation of the university, the continuing change of the university and a positive contribution towards the things that go on in the university. That in itself is one of the best learning experiences and that’s the way you create citizens, not by having them take a whole bunch of classes and then throwing them out there and saying “apply it.” You create citizens, I think, by having them behave as citizens while they’re here and take responsibility and empowering them and letting them make mistakes and all the other standard things that happen when you engage in this kind of thing. So that it’s not that they graduate and then become citizens, it’s that they are citizens while they’re here and you’re trying to strengthen the parts that you think are really important.

In a compelling discussion of participatory citizenship, Lichterman (1995) uses the idea of public commitment and an environmental group, the Greens, to examine the mechanics of social and political activism. There is one area of this discussion that I think is particularly important for my purpose. In Lichterman’s (1995) discussion of public commitment, he explicitly connects the personal and political. He notes that “the Greens aimed to create a political community in which the public good included, even depended upon, questioning aspects of personal life or personal style” (p. 296). This demonstration of the often cited feminist phrase “the personal is political” is important for my discussion of the relationship between citizenship and education in two ways. First it highlights how the relationship between students’ academic experiences and their “real” lives is critical to the learning process. Second, it demonstrates how people might navigate the tricky waters of contestation demanded in Dean’s model of reflective solidarity.

Generally, when we think about political action, we think about speaking but not
Young (1996) notes that a communicative theory of democracy “needs a broad and plural conception of communication that includes both the expression and the extension of shared understandings, where they exist, and the offering and acknowledgment of unshared meanings” (p. 133). Bickford (1996) makes a compelling argument for greater attention to listening as a critical component of political exchange and ultimately social action. She contends that we need to explore a democratic communicative interaction that depends not on the possibility of consensus but on the presence of listening. Such listening does not require the purification of motives or abstracting from our identity, nor does it involve empathy for one another or a strong sense of community. It is a constitutive element in the process of figuring out, in the face of conflict, what to do. Listening—as part of a conception of adversarial communication—is a crucial political activity that enables us to give democratic shape to our being together in the world. (p. 18)

Shauna describes some of the pedagogical challenges associated with this emphasis on listening:

If there is a challenge that I face right now it is that we talk about giving voice all the time in liberatory classrooms and liberatory projects, and I don’t think we spend the same amount of time talking about creating an audience to hear those voices which is more than active listening. It’s a very political position to take so you can hear what people have to say in a respectful as well as critical way. It’s not that we take whatever they say as claims to truth either, because there’s a problem with that. You know the suggestion that “this has been my experience and therefore you can’t challenge it.” So I think creating an environment where people actually hear each other, to do that responsibly. To speak and do that responsibly. It’s been a rare space where that actually happens. [Shauna]

Critical to this conception of listening is the idea that it is risky because if we are honestly and actively listening to one another, there is the very real possibility that our ground will be shifted and we will have to respond to this new information. I will pick up on this theme of risk as I discuss some of the participants’ experiences in the classroom. One of the most interesting aspects of Bickford’s analysis is her discussion of silence. I
have always been intrigued by our cultural discomfort with silence and with the strategic use of silence by those who are trying to gain or retain power. Most often I have run into this type of silence in the classroom from what I euphemistically refer to as the “caps in the back” (generally young, white, male students) who sit with their arms crossed, refusing to engage either physically or verbally with the material. Bickford (1996) acknowledges the multiple motives and forms of silence which encompass efforts to make space for alternative points of view, passive protest and avoidance. All of these constructions are represented in the interviews with participants.

Just as silence can take on multiple forms, so too can inquiry and argument. Bickford (1996) notes that

Just as we can imagine a questioning response that probes, extends, or gives new meaning to a speaker’s remarks, we can imagine a question designed primarily to evade or obscure those remarks. This indeterminacy in the meaning of questioning extends to argument as well. Argumentative responses are central to collective figuring out, and they act much like question-posing; they may show a desire to engage with a speaker, or a defensive reluctance to shift perspectives even temporarily. [emphasis in the original] (p. 157)

Once again this raises both the promise and the hazards of the university classroom as a site for citizenship education. The power imbalance that characterizes the student/teacher relationship complicates the potential for these sites of exchange.

Bickford (1996) asserts that there are at least three different possible outcomes of the type of “intersubjective communication” (p. 170) that she supports. There is certainly an opportunity for those involved to come to a shared understanding of the world. There is also the potential to acknowledge that there are divergent points of view that will be maintained, and finally there is the possibility that after listening to one another, there will be an unwillingness or inability for the participants to come to either of those places.
In other words the exchange may not help them to expand their understanding. This dissertation explores some of the tensions embedded in these exchanges as more contentious topics are addressed. What is the best instance of this type of communication when homophobic, racist or sexist views are being expressed? Certainly, there are times when oppressive positions provide opportunities to interrogate these perspectives and perhaps shift the ground of individuals expressing these views. However, are there also times when these views need to be shut down? Are there times when concerns about legitimizing these views through the provision of classroom space necessitate a silencing of these positions?

In support of a critical examination of listening, Young (1997) notes that

Some people reason that if individuals and groups cannot reverse perspectives then we cannot understand each other. This is too strong a conclusion to draw, however; irreversibility implies only that respect and effective communication cannot assume that we understand one another. Communicative ethics must be more open to listening and questioning than are stances that presume shared understandings of a common good. (pp. 6-7)

Dean agrees with Young’s assessment of communicative ethics and grounds reflective solidarity in these dynamics of contestation. It is this dimension of solidarity to which I now turn.

*Reflective Solidarity: Framing Our Interdependence in Contestation and Critical Discourse*

Mouffe (1992c) argues that “a democratic and pluralistic citizenship requires a theory of social justice that can serve as a framework for regulating the diversity and plurality of demands and rights claimed by the various participants in the political community” (p. 6). Mouffe (1993) contends that “the aim is to construct a ‘we’ as radical democratic citizens, a collective political identity articulated through the principle of
democratic equivalence. It must be stressed that such a relation of equivalence does not eliminate difference—that would be simple identity. It is only in so far as democratic differences are opposed to forces or discourses which negate all of them that these differences can be substituted for each other” (p. 84). Mouffe’s (1993) radical democratic conception of citizenship “recognizes that every definition of a ‘we’ implies the delimitation of a ‘frontier’ and the designation of a ‘them’” (p. 84).

It is this dilemma of “us and them” that Dean (1996) examines through reflective solidarity. Dean extends this examination of identity and a collective we by explicating the transition through the various phases of identity politics to a position of reflective solidarity. Dean (1996) argues that there are three stages that describe the evolution of identity politics: assimilation, accommodation, and accountability. In the assimilation phase the focus is on similarities to the dominant culture and the acquisition of legal rights is based on these similarities. There is an acknowledgment of an absence of various constituencies; however, it is assumed that demands to be heard are based on appeals to a common humanity.

The accommodation phase emphasizes difference and the development of that difference through cultural solidarity. The culture, not the state, is looked to for affirmation and acceptance, and society is expected to recognize and support the diverse needs and contributions of its members (Dean, 1996). Various theorists have pointed to the importance of identity politics in thrusting various forms of discrimination into the public realm. While making these issues visible was critically important, this attention to identities had the negative consequence of drawing lines in the sand, resulting in expectations about how to behave and, in some cases, how to prioritize identities on
particular issues. As I have already discussed, this form of identity politics has been examined for its essentialism and normative constraints (Epstein, 1987) and has fueled a resistance to more inclusive understandings of solidarity.

Finally in the accountability phase, Dean argues, we reach the greatest potential for social agency by recognizing the multiple locations that characterize our lives. In this phase “I am asking you to take responsibility for your complicity in the ways in which I am excluded and devalued. . . . I am establishing a connection with you, trying to get you to recognize that we are all in this together. I am appealing to solidarity, to our collective responsibilities toward each other and our life context” (Dean, 1996, p. 52). It is through this concept of reflective solidarity that Dean (1996) advocates for a rethinking of what is meant by community:

Traditionally, solidarity has been conceived of oppositionally, on the model of ‘us vs. them’. But this way of conceiving solidarity overlooks the fact that the term ‘we’ does not require an opposing ‘they,’ ‘we’ also denotes the relationship between ‘you’ and ‘me.’ Once the term ‘we’ is understood communicatively, difference can be respected as necessary to solidarity. Dissent, questioning, and disagreement no longer have to be seen as tearing us apart but instead can be viewed as characteristic of the bonds holding us together. (p. 8)

Dean (1996) discusses how many feminists have challenged the concept of solidarity because of assumptions regarding the universality embedded in the concept. Dean argues that reflective solidarity is in fact grounded in conflict and disagreement fostering the maintenance of individual and group differences. Dean (1996) contends that her goal “is to break through the opposition between difference and universality and to present an ideal of a universalism of difference—the ideal which infuses reflective solidarity” (p. 10).

Dean (1997b) provides some interesting commentary on essentialism when she
argues that any efforts to bring women together around real or perceived gender-based similarities is destined to fail because “they overlook the fact that whatever biological, ontological or psychological similarities women may share, we none the less differ in our understanding and experiences of these similarities and the place these similarities take in the context of our individual lives” (p. 248).

This is a reframing of experience in which the university can play a bigger role by encouraging and even demanding, through our curriculum, that members of the academic community be more self-reflective in consideration of these questions. It is through this type of introspection that educators will become more cognizant of the fact that we are often complicit in this essentializing discourse. In our efforts to find spaces in our curriculum for difference, educators often participate in the recipe approach of adding on difference that by its definition often does not raise the questions of intersecting identities that are embedded in any politics of difference.

I think one of the most critical aspects of Dean’s (1996) model is her assertion that to have a we there does not need to be a they. In this regard, Dean differs from Mouffe’s analysis of us versus them:

The communicative notion of ‘we’ conceives the achievement of solidarity as an ongoing process of engagement and critique. This thus allows reflective solidarity to embrace the universal ideals necessary for democracy as it urges us to strive communicatively to engage with and recognize each and all as part of our ‘we’. (Dean, 1996, p. 44)

One of the more interesting commentaries on the implications of this type of solidarity is by hooks (1994) who critiques a notion of sisterhood through the shared experience of victimhood. hooks reiterates that essentialist notions of struggle are problematic for, as long as there is a we (victims) and a they (victimizers), then we don’t
have to worry about accountability for our power over others. Borrowing from Habermas, Dean (1997b) notes that

In everyday speech, the expression ‘we’ is used in two ways. It can be externally established, opposed to a ‘they,’ or it can be established internally, designating a relationship among various ‘I’s. An externally established ‘we’ excludes someone else; its coherence requires some outsider to exist as a ‘they’. The internally established ‘we,’ however, draws its strength from the mutual recognition of disparate and differentiated ‘I’s. (pp. 251-252)

Unlike Habermas’s focus on consensus, however, reflective solidarity is based on developing a relationship of inquiry independent of any agreement. It assumes that there will be action taken that is not supported by other members of the group and acknowledges that not all discourse will bring us together. While Dean raises the question of how we differentiate between dialogue that builds our relationships from dialogue that undermines those relationships, I don’t believe that she ever satisfactorily addresses questions regarding: Which conflicts are destructive versus productive? Who decides? What happens when conflict is destructive and productive at the same time? These questions are central to the application of her theory in the classroom, or indeed anywhere else.

In her effort to respond to this dilemma, Dean (1996) talks about self-reflection as the mediator of the negative consequences of a consumption mentality when it comes to relationships, in other words, a lack of care for those with whom we disagree. The self-reflection that is necessary to avoid the problems of this consumerist mentality is made possible by Dean’s (1996) concept of the “situated, hypothetical third” (p. 32). Dean explains that “on the one hand, the third is always situated and particular, signifying the other who is excluded and marking the space of identity. On the other, including the third, seeing from her perspective, remains the precondition for any claim to universality
and any appeal to solidarity” (p. 4). It is this strategy of taking on the position of the third
that raises some interesting possible dynamics when discussions are characterized by
moralistic or highly religious positions. Dean (1997b) argues that

When we take the perspective of situated, hypothetical thirds, we are able to
expose the omissions and blind spots within the narratives of our shared identity.
We acquire the capacity to criticize and question the expectations of our group
from a variety of concrete positions. Furthermore, taking this perspective
prevents us from solidifying our particular sufferings, fears or demands into
languages which distort the needs and pains of the dispossessed through concepts
and vocabularies not their own. Because we see from beyond ourselves, we assert
and re-establish our solidarity in that act of our experience may not be the same as
our own but is none the less one deserving of our attention and respect. (p. 258)

While Young (2000) acknowledges the purpose of Dean’s discussion of the
imaginary third, she emphasizes the importance of “the actual presence of thirds” (p.
117n) who have the power to jar others out of a position that is grounded in a lack of
consideration of alternative experiences. In her critique of Young’s work, Hirschmann
(1998) notes that Young’s (1990) emphasis on living and breathing thirds “problematizes
a notion that has become important to much feminist theorizing, of being able to envision
the self as other, because such moves often hide differences in power that foster
appropriation and hamper listening” (p. 940). I do not see Young’s and Dean’s positions
as conflicting with one another as much as being complementary. In fact, Young (2000)
acknowledges “the point of Dean invoking a ‘hypothetical’ third as the position of the
differend that may always be there but silenced and not included” (p. 117n). Dean’s
model does not rely on there being a voice of protest; instead, all citizens are responsible
for raising differing points of view. While I agree that perhaps there has been unrealistic
optimism regarding our ability to take on positions that are not our own, I do think the
spirit of Dean’s situated, hypothetical third is important in asserting our responsibility to
one another even in the absence of an opposing voice. The differences between an actual third and a hypothetical third are particularly important when we bring these concepts into the classroom and start to conceptualize our responsibilities to one another.

I acknowledge the potential problems in the idea of the hypothetical other as it relies on individuals to argue for a position that is not their own. However, in an educational setting, I believe there is both a pedagogical necessity and desirability to this approach. The necessity is born out of the reality that there are many contexts that will not be characterized by the plurality that enables diverse voices to be present and heard. The desirability of this approach is grounded in questions regarding who would be responsible for voicing alternative realities. As my discussion of risk-taking will highlight, there are important issues related to assigning this responsibility to individuals whose perspectives and identities are marginalized.

Dean’s concept of the situated, hypothetical third further crystallizes my concern regarding the pedagogical need to draw a line in terms of respecting different perspectives. In a conception of solidarity that is grounded in its resilience in the face of adversity and conflict, how do we singularly or collectively decide which voices are not simply alternative points of view that need to be respected? Obviously at a societal level we have affirmed that, except for extreme cases (e.g. hate speech), people have the right to freedom of speech. However, in a more confined setting such as a university classroom, educators constantly make decisions regarding the valuing and devaluing of perspectives. Some of my participants took this one step further by posing the question of whether some perspectives need to be not simply critiqued, but indeed silenced. Once again the issue of homosexuality was raised on numerous occasions, reinforcing its value
in exploring the practical parameters of the concept of reflective solidarity.

In Hirschmann’s (1998) review of Young’s (1997) work, she argues that Young “glosses over the issue of disagreement; how much is allowable within community, how much room for dissent should there be, how much is consistent with meaningful and productive communication? Can you really listen to someone if you disagree deeply and inequality defines your relationship? But if listening is the key to equality, how can that be achieved?” (Hirschmann, 1998, p. 941). It is this discussion of boundaries that I find particularly interesting. I would like to extend Hirschmann’s critique to Dean’s model by arguing that Dean does not adequately explore disagreements in which parties may not be able to find a place to “agree to disagree.” Dean (1996) finds

Habermas’s account of the conditions for agreement in moral argumentation extremely helpful for imagining an ideal form for coalitions. Generally speaking, the conditions of practical discourse require that the participants respect one another as competent and truthful speakers, recognize the worthiness of each other to raise issues and claims, and understand each other as a responsible agent. With these sorts of requirements, coalitions can move beyond competing identity claims and achieve a reflective solidarity. (pp. 67-68)

Dean’s and Habermas’s reliance on respectful exchange are idealistic in the sense that there will always be positions taken that are grounded in disrepect and sometimes disdain. It is impossible to have a respectful exchange when words like “immoral,” “deviant” and “sick” are being used to describe lesbians and gay men. I contend there are positions that are taken that are racist, sexist or homophobic that prevent the type of respectful exchange that characterizes reflective solidarity. Despite this weakness, reflective solidarity provides an important framework to examine a more collaborative approach to addressing a wide variety of social issues and a more informed understanding of the collective responsibilities we have as active citizens.
Dean (1996) constructs reflective solidarity "as the activist ideal of a post-identity politics" (p. 49), arguing that it does not negate difference but it ensures that a focus on difference does not paralyze efforts to make change. This discussion is important to my research for two reasons. First, negative characterizations of identity politics have been used to marginalize demands for inclusion in the curriculum and the infrastructure of the university; therefore, it is important to think about identity politics more constructively. Second, many marginalized groups have recognized the quagmire that can be identity politics. I think Dean’s (1996) analysis is instructive in developing a model for understanding citizenship that challenges us to think more creatively about how to bridge gaps based on difference through discourse. Dean articulates a vision of solidarity that does not necessitate agreement on any substantive issues; however, her theory has limitations because of that quality. Clearly not all differences can be viewed the same way in an application of Dean’s reflective solidarity. In response to Young’s (1990a) discussion of the politics of difference, Fraser (1997b) argues that “there are different kinds of differences” (p. 204), whereby some should be celebrated, some should be diffused throughout society, and others should be rejected. Fraser’s argument “implies that we can make normative judgments about the relative value of alternative norms, practices, and interpretations, judgments that could lead to conclusions of inferiority, superiority, and equivalent value. It militates against any politics of difference that is wholesale and undifferentiated. It entails a more differentiated politics of difference” (p. 204).

Dean’s focus on critical discourse makes the university a crucial site for the discourse necessary to develop more critical approaches to these judgments. The
university is critical to the development of an active citizenry and an ideal location to explore how reflective solidarity stands up in the face of highly charged issues such as homosexuality. As I previously mentioned, the primary reason for including the issue of homosexuality was to respond to the stories that were told by participants. However, this theme also provides an important conceptual bridge for my discussion of the possibilities of reflective solidarity in education. Dean (1996, 1997a, 1997b) does not discuss education, rather she cites law as a critical venue for the enactment of the participatory principles embedded in reflective solidarity. Dean (1996) argues that

The reflective potential of law stems from its ability to stabilize and generalize the expectations that social members have of each other. . . . By guaranteeing that each is worthy of respect, law fosters the solidarity of participants secure in their discursive rights (public autonomy) and the inviolateness of their bodies and personality (private autonomy). What changes in the shift from one notion of autonomy to the other, then, is not the number of persons or the "degree" of identity involved, but the conditions of communication, the audience whom we address when raising claims and concerns. To be sure, once conceived as characteristic of a decentered society made up of a network of discursive spheres, these rights overlap. The solidarity of our intimate associations, our involvement in groups organized in terms of identity and interest, our civic engagements, and our participation in the universal community of discourse depends on principles that guarantee both our rights to place ourselves in these various spheres and to look upon them with a hypothetical gaze. (pp. 137-138)

In a much less optimistic characterization of law, Eisenstein (1996) constructs my bridge from Dean's discussion of law to my exploration of education as a site of reflective solidarity. Eisenstein (1996) examines how law is a "state-authorized pedagogy" (p. 263) as it "teaches us what is acceptable and what is suspect; what is right and what is wrong; what is permissible and what is not. . . . Laws are supposed to be fair. . . . They are supposed to be reasonable. They are supposed to be just. They are most often meant not to be questioned or challenged. As such, law is a pedagogy of silencing and quieting. It is a pedagogy of state authority. It is meant to protect and sustain" (p. 263).
I use this pedagogical model of law as a gateway to import Dean’s model of reflective solidarity into education.

*Educating for Citizenship: What Does Transformative Practice Look Like?*

Various authors have used many frameworks to discuss the ideas I intend to explore using the concept of educating for citizenship. There are, and have been, passionate debates about the role of education at all levels of the system, despite the fact that there has always been an aspect of citizenship education in public education. Generally speaking, feminists and critical theorists view the educational system, at all levels, as a critical forum for the promotion of social change (Briskin & Coulter, 1992). These efforts have paid attention to what, how and where we teach and learn. They are based on assumptions that a feminist and/or critical response to these questions will encourage social change. It is this assumption that I wish to explore in this thesis. How do we put into practice our philosophical commitment to education for citizenship, particularly when that commitment forces us to confront conflicting claims of truth or morality?

There is a rich body of literature that explores moral education and tends to reinforce the dilemmas of translating philosophy into classroom practice. Noddings (1994) argues that “the need for moral education is apparent to everyone, but concerns about the form it should take induce paralysis. Thus, I suggest that our forebearers were right in establishing the education of a moral people as the primary aim of schooling, but they were often shortsighted and arrogant in their description of what it means to be moral” (p. 173). This idea of moral education or character education has been problematized by many critics, who point to a very conservative rhetoric that often fuels
theoretical and practical discourse surrounding moral education (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1993). Moral education is often rooted in a religious context that promotes adherence to some interpretation of biblical truths. This approach tends to take negative stands on issues such as sex education, abortion, drug use, and homosexuality.

Other commentators talk about general education and the need to rejuvenate education that has as its primary goal the education of critical and active citizens (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993). Still others use liberal education to describe this type of citizenship education by discussing more inclusive curricula, employment equity programs that increase the numbers of minority professors, and accessibility initiatives that begin to shift the students to include more minority students. Critics of some of the approaches taken in the name of a general or liberal education point to the potential for a broad and inclusive approach to education in an effort to expose students to a wide array of issues and analyses. This type of pluralist position is in contrast to a more critical approach that examines how women, lesbians and gay men, people of colour and disabled people have been excluded by approaches that simply widen the number of topics covered or enhance visibility instead of critically examining curricular design and organizational histories (Sears, 1996). One of the clearest examples of these different approaches is demonstrated in the contrasting goals and strategies embodied in multicultural education as compared to anti-racist education. In describing what would now be referred to as anti-racist education, Macedo and Bartolome (1999) note that “in its early history, multicultural education involved: community empowerment, a challenge to low expectations for student learning, and an outrage about the absence of people of color from the curriculum” (p. vii). They argue that “multicultural education as human
relations—sidesteps the history of colonialism and today’s power struggles, by attempting to put a happy face on ‘diversity’” (Macedo & Bartolomé, 1999, p. xiv).

Challenging progressive discussions of educating for citizenship are competing calls for less attention to the goals embodied in this type of education to make room for the education and training that more obviously relate to economic needs and career readiness (Sears, 1996). This dichotomy of utilitarian education and citizenship education has been constructed and reconstructed over hundreds of years, and surprisingly the rhetoric remains relatively constant. In what is a provocative and overstated assessment of the problem, Sears (1996) notes that “the Australian Senate worried that the current overemphasis on the technical and vocational aspects of education at the expense of quality citizenship education will produce a generation of ‘skilled barbarians’” (p. 121).

The type of “quality citizenship education” to which Sears (1996) refers tends to revolve around various aspects of critical thinking and argumentation. As I have already mentioned, none of my participants except for Deirdre had heard of the concept of reflective solidarity; however, after providing them with a cursory description of the concept, they all spoke to some aspects of it in their pedagogy. For example, the idea of critical exchange as foundational to social agency resonated with all of the participants: “Empowering education, as I define it here, is a critical-democratic pedagogy for self and social change. . . . The goals of this pedagogy are to relate personal growth to public life, by developing strong skills, academic knowledge, habits of inquiry, and critical curiosity about society, power, inequality, and change” (Shor, 1992, p. 15).

One of the most common focal points for this type of critical analysis is the
meaning of difference that I explored in the previous section. There are tremendous opportunities available to educators in an examination of both difference and similarity. Unfortunately, one of the ways that resistance has manifested itself in the classroom is through an “us versus them” dynamic that has restricted constructive dialogue about our differences. Too often terms such as “political correctness,” “radical feminism” or “identity politics” have been invoked to maintain discursive divides and silence important interrogative practices. In an effort to deconstruct these potentially divisive concepts, Dean (1997a) argues that “by turning our attention away from ourselves and toward our interconnections, we reconceive our differences as opportunities, as perspectives and talents give us new understandings of the relations of power in some peoples’ lives as well as new ways to combat and resist them” (p. 5). I think this statement aptly describes a key aspect of my own pedagogy and some of the views expressed by my participants. However, I think efforts to realize this potential need to be more explicitly outlined as they refer to confronting discriminatory comments in the classroom. If process and not substance is the focus, then how does one address speech that needs to be challenged as something other than a difference of opinion?

I argue that a progressive and critical approach to educating for citizenship benefits from Dean’s reflective solidarity as it supports the deepening of experience discussed above. Further, I contend that a primary goal of educating for citizenship is to nurture an ongoing commitment to reflective solidarity that students draw on outside the postsecondary system. However, in embracing this commitment to critical discourse in contested spaces, we also need to recognize some of the limitations and hazards of this approach, as it neglects and sometimes ignores the impact of substantive disagreements.
Dean’s idea of reflective solidarity is grounded in discourse as opposed to the more common reference to solidarity that revolves around common interests. Dean (1997a) “argue[s] for a solidarity that arises through critique and discussion, in the course of communicative engagements like those of consciousness-raising” (p. 5). It is this focus on critical exchange that raises such interesting possibilities and potential obstacles for Dean’s work in terms of my pedagogical goals and as a framework to understand how to navigate difficult and sometimes painful discussions, particularly when bigoted comments are made. And it is for these reasons that I used it as a philosophical touchstone for my analysis of my conversations with participants.

The discussion of difference, which is so central to any discussion of solidarity or collective action, is reframed by Dean to emphasize the concept of specificity. Dean argues that specificity encourages us to ground our perspectives in our personal stories while at the same time it encourages us to avoid enveloping these stories in an identity that does not acknowledge the fluidity of our experiences or the locations from which we speak. While we need to frame our specificity within a broader context, the concept promotes an examination of how our stories provide opportunities for relationships with others (Dean, 1997a). This idea of specificity will be discussed in more detail in my examination of the teacher as text.

In her discussion of the responsible citizen, Nussbaum (1997) refers to this type of specificity as she notes the intersection of three qualities: the ability to be self-reflective, the ability to bond with those who are different from ourselves, and the ability to employ a “narrative imagination” (p. 10). In her book, Cultivating Humanity (1997), Nussbaum contends that “issues, for e.g., about the structure of the family, the regulation of
sexuality, the future of children—need to be approached with a broad historical and cross-cultural understanding. A graduate of a U.S. university or college ought to be the sort of citizen who can become an intelligent participant in debates involving these differences, whether professionally or simply as a voter, a juror, a friend” (p. 8).

Nussbaum (1997) notes that “narrative imagination is an essential preparation for moral interaction. Habits of empathy and conjecture conduce to a certain type of citizenship and a certain form of community: one that cultivates a sympathetic responsiveness to another’s needs” (p. 90). I argue that Dean’s situated, hypothetical third extends Nussbaum’s liberal construction of the narrative imagination by invoking a more explicit acknowledgement of the structural factors that constrain taking the perspective of the Other. However, Dean does not take this recognition of situatedness to its logical conclusion in recognizing that it will also differently limit participation of various social groups in the discourse on which reflective solidarity is built. The example of sexuality that I have used in my dissertation demonstrates the consequences of this inattention to access and the issues explored in particular exchanges.

**Heterosexism and Homophobia: A Challenge to Reflective Solidarity?**

During the writing of this dissertation, I had a very interesting encounter that further entrenched my commitment to exploring the dynamics of heterosexism and homophobia more explicitly. We were having a barbecue with a number of friends at our home and as usual having animated discussions about the world’s problems and how we were particularly well-equipped to solve them. Unfortunately, one of our friends had brought along a guest, who happened to be one of the problems we needed to solve. At one point in the evening, another friend described an incident when one of his students
expressed a great deal of dismay as a Christian because she felt that in “everyone’s” efforts to make gays and lesbians and their families feel more acceptance, the discomfort and opposition felt and expressed by many Christians was being disrespected, challenged and even silenced. One of our guests responded that we do need to respect alternative points of view, at which point I responded that “No, in fact I don’t believe that we do have to respect all points of view and indeed the bigotry that this student was trying to find space for needed to be confronted and rejected.” At this point, this friend of a friend joined the conversation with the declaration that she was a Christian and that she also felt that society is becoming increasingly intolerant of her views. This statement begged the question, “What are your views?”

She noted that it was not her place to judge us (homosexuals), that indeed God would do that (with her finger on various occasions pointing skyward); that the Bible was very clear that homosexuality was a sin; but that she had “lots of friends who are gay”—the heterosexual mantra. While I told her that her views were bigoted, I was still reluctant to reject her views in the fashion I felt (and still feel) they deserved. She was in our home!

So why were we, each in our own ways, so reluctant to shut her down? Why didn’t I ask her to leave? We would not have acted as gently if she had talked about the deviance of aboriginal or black people. Why did we try to find her some space? It is this question that I would like to turn to as I wrap up this theoretical discussion of citizenship.

First, we should recognize that we all come by our heterosexism honestly in that we are constantly inundated with messages and symbols that indicate heterosexuality is the only acceptable sexual orientation. Silence or overtly homophobic remarks are fuel
for the normality of heterosexuality and the abnormality of homosexuality. Demands for the same legal rights and responsibilities enjoyed by heterosexuals have continued to gain momentum since homosexuality was decriminalized in 1969. However, Lahey (1999) observes that in the absence of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, gays and lesbians would still be struggling to achieve some of the most basic human rights protections. Lahey argues that for too long, this appeal for equality "was doomed to failure for the same reason that 'homosexuality' was criminalized and suppressed for so long—social and moral disapproval" (Lahey, 1999, p. 26).

Two critical venues in which this disapproval manifests itself are the courts and educational institutions (Eisenstein, 1996; MacDougall, 1998). MacDougall (1998) discusses the relationship between these two key social institutions, the courts and education, in maintaining a heterosexist and homophobic society by "perpetuating the inferiorization and marginalization of homosexuality" (p. 42). MacDougall (1998) explores "how an exclusion of (positive) expression about homosexuality in schools has found support in judicial decisions that involve young people and homosexuality... [and how] the vested interests of the status quo and concerns about protecting religion-based attitudes are given priority over the protection of young people against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation" (p. 42). We are living in a time when the following examples of political and social paranoia are shaping educators' decisions at all levels as they make choices. We have witnessed the Surrey School Board ban three books from their classrooms. *Asha's Mums, One Dad Two Dad, Brown Dad, Blue Dad,* and *Belinda's Bouquet* are innocuous children's books that had the potential to provide some visibility for lesbians and gay men and their families, yet the Surrey School Board in
British Columbia has fought their inclusion all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada.\textsuperscript{7} We have watched parents threaten to pull their children out of school if the formation of Gay/Straight Alliance Clubs was not stopped. In fact, “in 1996, the Salt Lake City Board of Education, rather than allow students to form a Gay-Straight Alliance group on campus, voted to ban all extracurricular student programs” (Mathison, 1998, p. 152).

In Mathison’s (1998) discussion of the educational needs of gay and lesbian youth, she notes that “school authorities may punish a White student for calling a Black student a nigger by detention or expulsion, but students calling others faggot, queer, momma’s boy, dyke, lesbo often receive no punishment. Tolerance of these cultural slurs indicates to both hetero- and homosexual students that gay and lesbian students are open, deserving game for teasing, harassment, and, in many cases, physical abuse” [emphasis in the original] (p. 151).

While these events and issues are very disturbing individually, taken collectively these incidents contribute to a climate that inhibits educators from taking risks in classrooms in their curricular choices and perhaps even in the decision to come out. One of the most obvious ways that heterosexism and homophobia are left unchallenged is through silence—silence in our families, silence in our schools, silence in our media, and silence in our legislatures. MacDougall (1998) argues that

The law can ensure that the silencing of homosexuals and the silence about homosexuality is not accepted as the norm or as inevitable. To this end, courts can help break the scholastic and collegiate silence by speaking themselves, by

\textsuperscript{7} In 1997, the Surrey School Board refused to allow kindergarten teacher James Chamberlain to use story books depicting families with two moms or two dads. The Board’s refusal was based on concerns about parents whose religious beliefs might be offended by the acknowledgment of same-sex parents. On June 12, 2002, the Supreme Court of Canada heard the case of Chamberlain et al. V. Surrey School Board. On December 20, 2002, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of James Chamberlain stating that the Board’s decision contravened the B.C. School Act.
engaging in fair discussions about homosexuality, and by facilitating such expression by others. So far, however, the judicial record to this end has not been good. (p. 52)

MacDougall (1998) contends that despite this record, "what courts say and how they say it is important" (p. 49), and one of the most recent and dramatic examples of this is the recent 8-1 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in the case of Trinity Western University v. British Columbia College of Teachers (2001). In this decision the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the right of Trinity Western University to discriminate against lesbians and gay men through its requirement that students sign a contract outlining the "Responsibilities of Membership" that include "refrain[ing] from practices that are contrary to biblical teaching. These include but are not limited to . . . sexual sins including . . . homosexual behaviour" (Trinity Western University, 2002). In her dissenting opinion, Justice L’Heureux-Dube, noted that

Evidence shows that there is an acute need for improvement in the experiences of homosexual and bisexual students in Canadian classrooms. Without the existence of supportive classroom environments, homosexual and bisexual students will be forced to remain invisible and reluctant to approach their teachers. They will be victims of identity erasure. The students’ perspective must be the paramount concern and, even if there are no overt acts of discrimination by TWU graduates, this vantage point provides ample justification for the BCCT’s decision. The BCCT’s decision is a reasonable proactive measure designed to prevent any potential problems of student, parent, colleague, or staff perception of teachers who have not completed a year training under the supervision of SFU [Simon Fraser University], but have signed the Community Standards contract. The courts, by trespassing into the field of pedagogy, deal a setback to the BCCT’s efforts to ensure the sensitivity and empathy of its members to all students’ backgrounds and characteristics. (Trinity Western University v. British Columbia College of Teachers, 2001, p. 4)

In this opinion L’Heureux-Dubé squarely addresses the systemic discrimination experienced by gay and lesbian individuals and what MacDougall and others claim the
courts have been ignoring for too long. MacDougall (1998) concludes that "judges cannot stop the name calling on the playground or the hostility to homosexuality that some parents preach, but they do have the tools to prohibit the silencing of homosexuality and the dismissal of homosexuals from the education system. It is conceivable that over time such actions will help reduce the name-calling and hostility" (pp. 85-86). While my focus is on the education system, it is critical to understand the real and symbolic and indeed pedagogical power of all of our social institutions.

I believe that the question of homophobia and heterosexism represents one of the few “acceptable” forms of prejudice and for that reason I think it provides a very interesting “test” of Dean’s reflective solidarity. More important than my assertion is the fact that time after time research participants in my study raised this issue as one of the most challenging sources of discussion in the classroom.

Summary

Universities are important and unique political institutions that reflect certain societal relations and interests that characterize broader society. It is within this microcosm that a feminist conception of citizenship may inform a more useful understanding of utilitarian education. The challenge is to develop an understanding of citizenship that accommodates the pursuit of social justice through the acknowledgment of difference, deconstructs traditional distinctions between private and public spheres, and embraces the role of conflict and debate.

I believe that Mouffe’s (1992a, 1993) discussion of radical democratic citizenship coupled with Dean’s (1996) conceptualization of reflective solidarity attempt to satisfy these criteria by extending the individual rights discourse embodied in liberal theories of
citizenship and problematizing the communitarian ideals that characterize the civic republican principles of citizenship. Mouffe’s (1992a) discussion of the inadequacies of both the liberal and civic republican perspectives of citizenship stresses the need to understand citizenship as a dynamic and often fragile identity that “conceives of the social agent not as a unitary subject but as the articulation of an ensemble of subject positions, constructed within specific discourses and always precariously and temporarily sutured at the intersection of those subject positions” (p. 237).

Mouffe’s (1992a, 1993) conception of radical democracy emphasizes the centrality of conflict in a society that embraces multiple conceptions of identity and citizenship. According to Mouffe, this plurality of interests is essential to a democratic society because it rejects the possibility and desirability of a common good. A radical democratic citizenry is linked not though its shared interests and identity politics, but through its shared experiences in political struggle.

Both Mouffe (1993) and Dean (1996) problematize the juxtaposition of equality and difference by emphasizing the need simultaneously to embrace certain differences—differences that are grounded in equality and justice—and develop a sense of political commonality. Young emphasizes the need to incorporate difference in our conception of citizenship; however, Mouffe (1993) argues that Young’s examination of “group differentiated citizenship” is limited by its essentialist understanding of groups based on established categories of difference. Mouffe (1993) argues that Young “has an ultimately essentialist notion of ‘group’, and this accounts for why, in spite of all her disclaimers, her view is not so different from the interest-group pluralism that she criticizes: there are groups with their interests and identities already given, and politics is not about finding
ways to satisfy the demands of the various parts in a manner acceptable to all” (p. 86).

Mouffe (1992b) argues that “the aim of a radical democratic citizenship should be the construction of a common political identity that would create the conditions for the establishment of a new hegemony articulated through new egalitarian social relations, practices and institutions” (p. 380). According to Mouffe (1992b), in radical democratic citizenship difference is acknowledged but is secondary to “the common recognition by the different groups struggling for an extension and radicalization of democracy that they have a common concern” (p. 379). The acknowledgment and acceptance of that collective identity and its connectedness to social justice is central to the political participation that is required of the radical democratic citizen.

Fraser’s (1997b) exploration of definitions of the public sphere is implicitly and explicitly connected to my discussion of citizenship. Fraser contends that there are multiple publics that are accessed by different groups of individuals at different times. Fraser (1997b) argues that “one task for critical theory is to render visible the ways in which societal inequality infects formally inclusive existing public spheres and taints discursive interaction within them” (p. 80). Fraser (1997b) challenges Habermas’s concept of a singular public sphere by arguing that “in stratified societies, arrangements that accommodate contestation among a plurality of competing publics better promote the ideal of participatory parity than does a single, comprehensive, overarching public” (p. 81). While Dean (1996) argues that Fraser has misinterpreted Habermas’s description of the public sphere, she supports Fraser’s recognition of multiple public spheres by pointing to the many public spaces that have been created by marginalized groups and used to contest existing structural inequities.
The concept of public spaces is intricately connected to rethinking education for citizenship within the university. Universities have always been recognized as sites for rigorous debate and thoughtful reflection; however, it has only been recently that the privilege and exclusion that characterize many of the universities’ public spaces have been challenged. The increasing demands for equity in faculty hiring and promotion, the rise of identity-based disciplines (e.g. women’s studies), and curricular and pedagogical innovation are all indications of the establishment and reshaping of public and subaltern counter-public spaces in universities.

The incorporation of multiple interpretations of citizenship and the activities embodied in those definitions is another feature of the radical democratic perspective that illuminates this discussion of citizenship education. Mouffe (1992b) asserts that if “the exercise of citizenship consists in identifying with ethico-political principles of modern democracy, we must also recognize that there can be as many forms of citizenship as there are interpretations of those principles and that a radical democratic interpretation is one among others” (p. 378).

It is this recognition of multiple subjectivities and the value of informed debate that makes the university an ideal site for educating for citizenship. Dean’s (1996) discussion of the accountability phase of identity politics and Mouffe’s (1992b) conceptualization of radical democracy stress the need to deconstruct the categories of difference that are imposed by various forces in society and to acknowledge the multiple locations that each of us occupy at any particular point in time. Once we have embraced the idea that there is no one conception of identity or democracy, “all we have left is reflective solidarity—a solidarity rooted in our ability to connect with each other through
As I think about educating for citizenship in the university, I find the concept of reflective solidarity located within a participatory democracy to be a useful one. Dean (1996) argues that if solidarity is not to be discarded as yet another exclusionary ideal, it will have to be conceived so as to take seriously the historical conditions of value pluralism, the ever present potential for exclusion, the demands of accountability, and the importance of critique. This suggests that the permanent risk of disagreement must itself provide a basis for solidarity. In contrast to conventional solidarity in which dissent always carries with it the potential for disruption, reflective solidarity builds from ties created from dissent. (pp. 28-29)

I contend that while Dean's work provides a compelling framework to examine the work of postsecondary education, she does not adequately interrogate the fracturing that is unavoidable and perhaps even desirable in some debates. In my effort to build on Dean's work, I argue that in some cases reflective solidarity must give way to reflective accountability, which necessitates some normative assessment of the claims being made. In support of this position, Petrovic (2002) notes that "neutrality—in the form of allowing all views—may be required in liberal democratic society, but it is not desirable in schools" (p. 149).

Reflective solidarity raises the definitional debate above the differing interpretations of concepts such as equality and social justice by embedding citizenship in the political activities associated with critical discourse. This emphasis on discourse focuses our attention on the people with whom we engage in these discourses and the settings of these conversations. Bickford's (1996) discussion of listening notes that "whom we 'happen' to see regularly as we move through the world has an influence on whom we think of as citizens, and whom we think to engage with as citizens" (p. 184).
Chapter 4 begins this exploration of the practice of engagement by examining the university as a critical site of this type of discourse.
Chapter IV
Educating for Citizenship

The purpose of this chapter is to bridge the theoretical conversation about citizenship in the previous chapter with the more specific discussion of educating for citizenship in the university that is taken up in the balance of the dissertation. First, I explore the operational and organizational realities of the university that provide opportunities for and obstacles to educating for social justice. In particular I examine how corporatization, the primacy of research over teaching, and the traditionally solitary nature of teaching in the university contribute to how educators and students conceptualize their roles in this type of education. Second, I begin to examine the relationship between a philosophical commitment to educating for citizenship and practice that promotes the goals embodied in that commitment. I present a discussion of the characteristics of this type of education and the common disconnection between theory and practice. Finally, I explore the potential of educating for citizenship to promote activism by the members of the university communities. I discuss the politicization of education, the need for students to feel empowered to contribute to their communities and the importance of the motivations and context of this activism.

The University as a Site for Citizenship Education

It should not be surprising that there is a range of opinions with respect to the role of public education. Aronowitz and Giroux (1993) posit that “the left argues that schools habituate individuals to the real world of domination, while the right argues that the ideology of student-centered education has destroyed the ability of schools to help the
economy as well as its workers to survive and perform in an ever-changing market

economy” (p. 21).

The historical and contemporary tension between liberal education and
economically utilitarian education that Aronowitz and Giroux (1993) identify and that I
raised in the introduction to my dissertation is not the focus of this work. However, it is
essential to look at how the participants contextualize their experiences of educating for
citizenship within the university and the conflicting perspectives regarding its role. To
this end Lipsitz (2000) embarks on a very compelling discussion about the challenges
faced by progressive academics when one “believe[s] in a more egalitarian and open
society while working within increasingly elitist and closed institutions, to conceive of
intellectual work as social and collective while feeling cut off from collectivity and
immersed in sustained surveillance and individual evaluation, to believe deeply in the
need to build a different kind of society while feeling compelled to struggle for resources
and power within the one that actually exists” (p. 80).

It is centrally important that we pay more attention to the ways in which
academics negotiate these tumultuous waters as they try to maintain their intellectual,
emotional and political well-being. It is vital that we acknowledge that the critical
exchange of ideas that provides the foundation for reflective solidarity is happening
within the physical and relational walls of the university. The purpose of this chapter is
to begin to delve into the practice of educating for citizenship in the university.

I begin with this lengthy quote from Shauna, one of my participants, because I
think she covers a great deal of ground that I hope to expand on throughout this chapter
and the balance of my thesis:
There’s one thing that irritated me about the Academic Plan. There are frequent references to how UBC can attract the ‘best’. The best faculty, the best staff and the best students and I don’t hear language about creating the best [italics added]. I mean ‘the best’ is a problematic term anyway; I have a problem with the discourse of excellence, but what are our responsibilities for actually creating conditions in which a person can actually achieve their best or a community can achieve their best? Our focus here at UBC should be on where we start, not where we end up. I think that’s deeply flawed and that’s why I’m highly suspect about all of this discourse about teaching that’s going on right now. I think the institutional regime in place here is geared more towards attracting “the best” and rewarding certain kinds of activities, a limited set of activities. It’s not about creating conditions for individual and collective citizenship.

That being said, I don’t want to get too deterministic and pessimistic about the university’s ability to support more collaborative approaches to education, but I think there are some pretty severe constraints. I do think making connections with other people who are doing neat stuff is important, and they’re not necessarily your colleagues in your department, and so what you’re facing are ways of finding those folks. This place is so big and we’re often so isolated from each other. So how can you actually create a community at UBC where you might even find out about people doing similar things within a context where people are so overwhelmed? It’s shifted a wee bit and I hope it’s more than a rhetorical discourse around the importance of teaching and challenging this as a research-focused institution.

Shauna’s comments express a tension that was echoed by a number of participants. On one hand, there are many aspects of the university that make more critical approaches to teaching and learning difficult. In this vein, Ng (1993) reminds us that education is not apolitical and that “to act against the grain requires one first to recognize that routinized courses of action and interactions within the university are imbued with unequal power distributions which produce and reinforce various forms of marginalization and exclusion” (p. 198).

Gaard’s (1996) discussion of structural realities explores the impact of sexuality on women’s experiences in the university by examining the ways that sexist and

9 UBC’s strategic planning process that examined four key areas: The University in Society, Student-centred Learning and Teaching, Faculty-centred Learning and Research, and Running the Academic Enterprise.
heterosexist norms in the academy serve to silence women. Gaard makes the provocative assertion that "anti-lesbian harassment is central to any discussion of antifeminism simply because, to the dominant culture, the lesbian represents the ultimate threat of feminism: a woman who is independent of male approval psychologically, economically, and sexually" (p. 115). As she describes the differences between lesbian harassment and more general forms of harassment, Gaard raises the issue of "contrapower harassment" (p. 116) whereby members of marginalized groups (e.g. white, heterosexual women) exert coercive power over other "more" marginalized women. If we are to discuss the potential of universities to be sites of citizenship education, we must address the oppressive and often counterproductive experiences that characterize the university experience for many individuals. Without a critical examination of these realities, it will be impossible to realize or even imagine universities as key sites for educating for social justice.

On the other hand, the university provides a discursive venue infused with intellectual, emotional and political energy. Giroux notes "institutions of higher education must be seen to be deeply moral and political spaces in which intellectuals assert themselves not merely as professional academics but as citizens, whose knowledge and actions presuppose specific visions of public life, community, and moral accountability" (cited in Carlson, 1998, p. 549).

One of the characteristics of UBC that made it an interesting site for my study was the Trek 2000 process, which framed a strategic planning exercise for the university. One of the goals of the university identified in this report was to offer students an intellectually challenging education that takes advantage of our unique social and cultural make-up, geographical location, and research
environment, and that prepares them to become active citizens of the twenty-first century through programmes that are international in scope, interactive in process, and interdisciplinary in content and approach. Graduates of these programmes will have the critical thinking, communication, and teamwork skills to equip them for responsible citizenship, as well as for employment or further studies. [emphasis in the original] (Trek 2000, p. 4)

In discussing the challenges embodied in both the opportunities and the obstacles to more innovative and participatory models of teaching and learning, the participants described how their efforts were shaped by (a) corporatization of the university, (b) teaching as a secondary focus of the university, and (c) teaching and learning as potentially solitary activities. The purpose of this discussion is to highlight the context within which creative and progressive educators are engaging with their students. I want to introduce these three areas by using the participants’ comments to engage with the literature.

*The Corporatization of the University: An Impediment to Educating for Social Justice*

For universities to realize their potential as promoters of social change, we must talk about what some of the expectations around that experience might be. Giroux (1992) argues that “institutions of higher education, regardless of their academic status, represent places that affirm and legitimate existing views of the world, produce new ones, and authorize and shape particular social relations; put simply, they are places of social and moral regulation” (p. 120). In an examination of the power of formal education, McLaren (1999), in his discussion of Freire’s contributions to the field of critical pedagogy, argues that Freire believed “schools are places where, as part of civil society, spaces of uncoerced interaction can be created” (p. 51).

A number of the participants spoke about the range of communities that the
university needs to develop relationships with and, in a variety of ways, most participants expressed some concerns regarding the university's commitment and ability to forge equitable and inclusive partnerships in learning. One of the more interesting aspects of this discussion is the increasing prominence of business interests in the university:

UBC is not well connected to the community in part because they never ask themselves “Which community?” When they're thinking about community, in my mind they're thinking of the corporate sector. . . . So number one, the big question is “How do we make UBC more connected and potentially more relevant.” We're not physically accessible, we're not culturally accessible—it's not a welcoming place. People can't afford to drive here and park. There's no proper public transportation that comes back and forth, the last express bus leaves at 5:35, gimme a break. And this is an example of what I mean about rhetoric, picking up on the discourse of community participation but not having any ability to translate it into meaningful practice. [Dawn]

In Dever's (1999) discussion of the corporatization of the university, she asserts that “against a background of economic rationalism, burgeoning bureaucratization, and rapid corporatization, we have witnessed a redefinition of our universities’ teaching goals away from earlier learning-based models” (p. 50). I know that some of my participants may challenge whether the learning-based models described by Dever (1999) were ever in place in any significant way; however, there were a number of references made by participants to this corporatization of the university and a more utilitarian emphasis on education. Although corporatization was a shared point of discussion, there were a number of different approaches to the issues presented by this apparently new reality. There seemed to be three general aspects of the discussion of corporatism that are relevant to the climate within which educating for citizenship might flourish: (a) issues of consumerism and students, (b) disciplinary pressures to develop corporate support, and (c) pressures to be more responsive to economic demands regarding the perceived utility of education.
Van Valey’s (2001) discussion of the student as consumer “tends to shift much of the responsibility for learning from the student to the teacher” (p. 6). Dawn discussed this issue of consumerism and the challenges that shape her engagement with this phenomenon:

A mistake on the part of the universities is the deliberate move towards a corporate idea of what education is. Which means it’s a commodity, the students are consumers, which make them automatically more passive. They’re purchasing a particular thing so they’re going to be guaranteed a certain quality of a product and the bigger the classroom the better . . . I would say the students are inadvertently being seen as consumers and they’re consumers of credentials. It’s all about getting them out there being successful, getting a well paying job. Citizenship means something a little bit different to me, and if UBC was even thinking along the lines of their students as future citizens, it would be helpful.

An issue related to consumerism that was raised by participants was the perception that there is a new student profile that is characterized by part-time students or full-time students who are heavily involved in employment and family responsibilities:

I think part of the corporatization of the university is the very common practice among students in our department to take three courses and to work full-time. And, that’s a very different university experience than I had. These structural arrangements make a huge, huge difference. . . . It has the potential in an ideal world to enrich the student body and to bring more to this place, but I have a sense that it’s detractive rather than additive. [Gerry]

The increase in the average age of students, the higher proportion of these students who are women who continue to shoulder a disproportionate responsibility for unpaid caregiving work, the likelihood that students are working as they go to school, the significant proportion of students who are attending part-time, and who are raising families has shaped the experiences of all those involved in university education. It follows that “these new students must manage major competing demands for their time. To them, higher education is only one of the things they are doing, and maybe not the most important one. In comparison to the students who attended colleges and universities
in the 60s and 70s under in loco parentis, today’s students face a dramatically more
complex set of priorities” (Van Valey, 2001, p. 6).

A second area that was explored in response to this theme of corporatization
focused on pressures created by differential access to corporate funding for academic
disciplines and the potential conflicts associated with this type of funding. Van Valey
(2001) argues that “instead of the intrinsic value that had traditionally been associated
with a higher education (intellectual pursuit), considerable pressure now exists to focus
on the economic outcomes of that education” (p. 4). Wendy highlights some of these
pressures:

Unfortunately, growth is economically driven to a large part, because at
universities the funding is there on the natural science side, and so they’re the
ones that grow and get new buildings and continue to flourish. The social science
side, because they tend to be more critical, they’re not doing functional things for
the forestry industry or for business, they’re critiquing existing social relations.
So it’s not the media or big business or anybody who’s funding them, if anything
they’re at the root of the critique. So this emphasis on economics is very
worrisome.

Held (2002) argues that this competition is exacerbated as “universities adopt the
corporate language and thinking of efficiency and productivity; workloads are increased
and salaries decreased, except for the ‘stars’ that make the university more competitive
and the educational product they offer more marketable” (p. 27). All of these issues
contribute to the context within which education for social justice is supported or
thwarted. While the issues of citizenship cut across all disciplines it is easy to imagine
how a devaluing of the social sciences would have a significant negative impact on the
success of these efforts in the university.

A third key aspect of corporatization raised by participants is the tension between
utilitarianism and general approaches to education that I raised in Chapter 1. As tuition
increases and government funding for education decreases, educational programs will be pressured to “tighten up” their curriculum and justify their economic utility using criteria that do not celebrate more general educational goals. Marlee discussed this duality between general education and professional education or training that has been set up in many programs and institutions:

It is getting more and more difficult to justify teaching through critical analyses as compared to professional training. And I think it’s going to be harder and harder to justify that even though it’s more crucial now than it ever was. ... I think there are a couple of things going on that are related. One is the push within the university to have more practical, work related [courses and programs] that are going to help people get jobs, and the way that plays out in law school is we are then educating people to become practicing lawyers, whereas many of the Law School faculty feel like we’re in the university because we’re part of a much more general education process. Yes, we’re teaching some lawyers, but we’re also teaching people who want to learn about legal knowledge and how it’s constructed and how you manipulate it in other contexts. So there always has been a pressure from the profession just to train lawyers and various shifts are making it more difficult to resist that pressure. It’s a problem because in law they need to learn critical analysis so they’re not just taking things at face value, but they’re trying to figure out the context: “why was the judge saying that?” “What kind of framework are they operating within conceptually to make everything seem legitimate in terms of their decision-making process?” That sort of thinking is going to actually benefit you and help you write better legal arguments. One of the other things that’s happening is cutbacks. We just don’t have the positions, we can’t hire, and this changes the whole nature of the conversation. It means that we can’t be innovative because we don’t even have enough money for what we already do, and I think that’s another form of resistance. For example, there’s a new Centre in First Nations Legal Studies based at the law school, and we’re hearing, “Fine as long as it doesn’t cost any money.”

My discussion of community and corporatization is meant to contribute to the context within which I want to examine the contribution of reflective solidarity and present the idea of reflective accountability. As the profiles of students and relationships with outside agencies change, the framework used to understand accountability will shift as well. One of the issues that is influenced by the corporatization of the university is the balancing of teaching and research and the concern of many that decreased funding will
further elevate the importance of research in faculty workloads. This further erosion of the importance of teaching will impede the more progressive approaches to teaching and learning upon which educating for social justice is based.

**Teaching as a Secondary Enterprise**

Intricately connected to Maria’s earlier discussion about the positive potential of the university as a site for educating for social change is an examination of how the university has responded to these shifts toward more collaborative and engaged approaches to learning. Several participants talked about the challenges faced by individuals who are committed to critically examining and ultimately improving their pedagogy within an institution that focuses on research as the primary activity of faculty and the reality that, as Deirdre observed, “We don’t talk very much about our teaching.”

Gerry’s conversation continued this theme:

Teaching is such a solitary thing. . . . So it is in discussion with individuals who I think are good teachers that I explore other approaches—but we don’t talk about our teaching much. . . . One of my research collaborators has been much more involved in pedagogy and about six years ago she said she was “never going to give a lecture again.” I thought, “What are you going to do then?” . . . Ideas about teaching come through the crevices of conversation . . . but it’s just such an ignored part of university life. It’s not what we get credit for and yet there is all this talk around giving it more emphasis and moving from a teaching environment to a learner-centred environment.

Dawn confided

My husband’s always saying that I’ve “had over ten years of fine tuning the skill of being boring” because what we do is lecture and it’s true, it’s what we do. I’ve never been trained in how to teach, I got a sociology degree, I was not a teacher. I was a sociologist and a researcher and it was expected that I would learn how to teach. Well, I’m pretty comfortable with my content, I don’t have any problem with that at all, but the whole idea about how to inspire and how to present the content in a way that’s relevant to students, how to build their real capacity to think is what interests me. How do you do that? I don’t know.
In her discussion of institutional structures and practices that impede more progressive approaches to teaching and learning, Jo-ann highlights a taken-for-grantedness of university culture:

I think that’s the question: “Why are we doing it this way?” “Why are things segmented?” “Why do we have to have X number of courses at three credits each?” So we need to get out of the boxes that we’re in that have created the tensions of time—all the pre-requisites for example. We need to ask, “Why do we need all of this?” And the students themselves need to become more active learners and ask, “Why are we having to do this?”

Jo-ann’s comments regarding some of the challenges in trying to respond to the needs presented by students with the traditional models of teaching and learning in the university, and Gerry’s earlier comments regarding the changing profile of students are important as educators consider various pedagogical approaches to educating for citizenship. Van Valey (2001) notes that

Because more students are attending college while working and raising families, departments must find ways of offering legitimate educational experiences that do not ignore students’ life circumstances, but rather take them into account. Some programs have realized that their students are functioning under such multiple cross pressures, and offer such strategies as collaborative learning, experiential approaches, and service learning (sometimes called community-based education) as ways of mediating those cross pressures. Departments would be well advised to expand such opportunities. (p. 7)

Interestingly these types of creative responses are constrained by narrow and traditional expectations regarding workloads, collegial relations, and curricular rigour.

Teaching and Learning as Solitary Activities

Evidence of this more individualized and solitary model of teaching and learning that precludes the types of innovative approaches discussed above was explored in a number of conversations in a range of ways. Wendy’s discussion of faculty evaluation was particularly interesting as it provided another illustration of the difficulties associated
with operationalizing even the most admirable of goals. Wendy and Karen express their desire for the university to be an environment that more actively supports collaborative models of teaching, researching and learning and their frustration as they experience barriers to this type of support:

One colleague would often say to me, “Wendy, you’re always out there doing those workshops and people ask you to come and speak on stuff, and all that time could be spent on getting out another publication.” And I could just never figure out why this person didn’t see the value of my work. Finally he said, “Well I’ve been here 20 years and I’ve never had to leave my lab to do research.”

And I finally came back with, “They’re my lab,” and he got it! . . . I could have got some of those things [tenure, rank] more quickly if I played the game the way you’re supposed to. But I knew what the game was, and I decided I was going to do something different and that I was going to tell people why I was doing it differently . . . . And again many of my colleagues can’t understand that because they can have the rats run around this way this week and do something different next week and measure that and they’ve got a publication . . . . the whole reward system—and I don’t think it’s just universities, it’s very much an individual model—it’s not a collaborative one and I don’t think we’ve figured out how to reward collaborative work. [Wendy]

The workload is really getting excruciating. It’s gone up and up and up with fewer faculty and more students. We seem to accept that “That’s what we all do, so get used to it.” And I think that’s a very non-supportive attitude. I think people are hurting and people are getting sick. I think it’s the students who suffer in all of that and I think it’s time to rethink the whole thing. So, in a sense you’re not nurtured. “If you do well and you write all your papers and get them published we will support you” in that sense. The personal kind of in-between support that like-minded people can do for each other, that doesn’t happen a lot because it’s too competitive around here, except in the Centre where I haven’t found that competitiveness. . . . I’ve often talked to my colleagues saying “I think I should pull the fire alarm, everybody go out of the building,” and we really just look at each other and say, “Do we really want to do this work under these conditions?” [Karen]

Corporatization seems to accentuate these feelings, because as it becomes further entrenched, organizational decisions such as increasing tuition fees and class sizes exacerbate the stress experienced by faculty and students. These decisions shape the accessibility of postsecondary education and the nature of that educational experience.
hooks notes that “overcrowded classrooms are like overcrowded buildings—the structures can collapse” (cited in Dever, 1999, p. 50). I argue that administrative and classroom practice is the foundation upon which the university educates for social justice, and if there is no appropriate institutional support, then it is difficult to develop anything but pockets of pedagogical activism.

Even when the university makes very explicit efforts to address this inattention to teaching, it appears that these efforts often fall short in part because of the structures within which these efforts are undertaken. At the University of British Columbia these efforts often fall under the rubric of the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG), and a number of participants spoke about the role of this type of centre. Shauna, who has been involved with the administration of programs through TAG, notes that a primary emphasis of many of the workshops on teaching “is trying to get faculty to think about learning objectives as opposed to teaching objectives which are often sticking to what we need to cover in that curriculum.”

Interestingly, but not surprisingly, there were a few comments that questioned some of the efforts of TAG. In particular, Gerry’s comments highlight the unknowability that Ellsworth (1997) discusses as inherent and desirable in the learning process:

I have this sense that TAG is about a very positivist kind of teaching and I have not taken advantage of it because it seemed a little too orderly for me—which may be totally wrong. It may be as chaotic as I am over at TAG, but I get the sense that you’re supposed to be very prescriptive. [Gerry]

Echoing these concerns about process, Marlee commented that she had “a real aversion to those TAG seminars because I find they don’t deal with the real issues of

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10 The Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth has focused on, through the provision of workshops, peer coaching, resource materials, and supports for new faculty, strengthening the pedagogical and curricular skills and strategies of members of UBC’s teaching community.
power dynamics within the classroom.” Whether or not these were accurate statements about the real focus of TAG, the perceptions sometimes become the reality as the individuals who are drawn to this type of institutional support will naturally, and perhaps rightly, begin to shape the curricular activities of the office.

In summary, I have discussed three key areas that characterize some of the challenges that face educators working within universities and are examined in the literature and discussed by participants in this project. First, corporatization and consumerism are realities that shape the potential for more critical approaches to teaching and learning. Second, teaching needs to be celebrated and supported in ways that promote more conversations about practice. Third, collaborative approaches to learning, including pedagogy and research, need to be embraced and valued. These three areas of our conversations about the potential of the university as a site of educating for citizenship are taken up at various points in the balance of this thesis as I explore the practice of educating for social justice within the framework of reflective solidarity.

The university’s greater attention to business interests makes it disturbing yet not surprising that there is less and less discussion of ways that educational institutions can be more supportive of education, at all levels, aimed at promoting citizenship. Despite, or perhaps because of, all of the challenges, frustrations and opportunities discussed, Shauna talked about the importance of her location in the university and strategies that she used to work productively in this space:

I think in order to do the work I want to do, politically motivated work, I should stay here. This is a very rich and important place to be, but it is a space filled with contradictions so I can’t be naive about that. So how do I stay? You adhere, to a certain extent, to the definitions of success constructed by others and at the same time you challenge them. So you work them and you disrupt them simultaneously and you seize moments where you can push that a little bit further. I don’t want
to succeed purely on those terms, but at the same time I have to be strategic. It's working in the hyphens in a sense, staying in that very uncertain ground.

One of the ways that educators like Shauna, discuss shifting the dynamics of power and social privilege, is to talk about promoting social activism within and outside classrooms. Not surprisingly, there is a great deal of variation in how participants conceptualize educating for citizenship and the balance of this chapter will begin to explore some of the conceptual and applied aspects of transformative practice.

The Pedagogical Possibilities of Educating for Social Change

In Chapter 3, I introduced some key conceptual elements of my discussion of educating for citizenship including identity, critical discourse, specificity and oppression. I now want to begin to explore how the participants described their philosophical and practical commitment to educating for citizenship. All of the participants talked in some way about the relational qualities of their approaches to teaching and learning and the complexities that are embedded in this emphasis. The goals of educating for citizenship described by participants revolved around concepts of understanding, empowerment, activism, critical thinking and debate, community involvement, and reflection. It is this relationship with others that Maria describes in her view of citizenship:

Let me talk about what I want from students from the Faculty of Science because I certainly want them to be good citizens. First of all, I want them to care about the community that they’re a part of and to feel a wish to contribute to it and to be part of the process that guides its future. And by community I mean civic community, I mean the professional community. I mean any group or body that they are a part of or feel an identity with. I want them to feel a sense of responsibility for making sure that that particular body is moving in positive directions. So then there’s the question of what is positive and that embodies thinking about society more generally and thinking about rights and responsibilities and value systems and ethics. So I want students, in whatever they’re doing, to be aware of the fact that when you are looking at things, there’s a narrow context, there’s a broader context and then the progressively broader
context. And that at certain times and in making certain decisions, it’s appropriate to use a narrower context in order to resolve the issue but to be always aware that there are the broader contexts. Students need to be capable of moving backwards and forwards and having a dialogue with people about the different ways in which these different issues need to be examined and how one has to make trade-offs and weigh consequences of various kinds of decisions.

The Socratic tradition of the ideal of the examined life that is in some ways reflected in Maria’s conversation is central to educating citizens as we embrace the idea that all of us have the capacity to be more critical of our own beliefs. However, this approach suffers from the same philosophical quagmire as the translation of critical pedagogy into transformative practice. In other words, how do we encourage individual citizens to become motivated to be involved in this admirable self-critical posture? One of the ways that this translation has been thwarted is through the construction of an educated citizenry using more superficial definitions of civic education.

Berman’s (1997) discussion of the development of social responsibility as central to education highlights the shortcomings of the more economically-driven utilitarian approach. Participants talked very little about some of these more traditional conceptions of citizenship or civic education. Berman (1997) notes that educators must be much more attentive to the relational qualities of social responsibility than implied by the individualist competencies embedded in civic competence. Once again I find some important parallels with Dean’s model of reflective solidarity in that the emphasis is on communicative relationships instead of the more static conception of rights and responsibilities. Dawn’s effort to define citizenship echoes the inadequacy of civic education efforts as she responds to a question about her definition of educating for citizenship:

To tell you the truth, I couldn’t tell you because that would be too normative to
me. I don’t know what it means to be a good citizen. I believe that the university should play a role in preparing people to be thinking members of society, but citizenship is too linked to nationalism or something in my own mind.

Karen “think[s] every faculty should look at that notion of citizen and who an educated person is as opposed to thinking always about how our disciplines and specializations frame our educational goals.” Karen’s comment highlights one of the organizational characteristics of the university that constrains efforts to educate for citizenship across the curriculum, in contrast, say, to the way we value writing across the curriculum. Giroux (1998) observes that “while it is central for university teachers to expand the relevance of the curriculum to include the richness and diversity of the students they actually teach, they also need to correspondingly decenter the curriculum . . . . The distribution of power among teachers, students, and administrators provides not only the conditions for students to become agents in their learning process but also the basis for collective learning, civic action, and ethical responsibility” (p. 50).

A number of participants emphasized the process and communal aspects of citizenship embodied in reflective solidarity as the framework within which critical analysis can be supported. For these participants educating for citizenship revolved around relational qualities. Susan argued that “citizenship necessitates a spirit of engagement that certainly allows for change and raising new issues but treats people in a respectful way.”

A good citizen is someone who’s concerned about bettering the social condition of others around them. So one of my goals would be for students to see themselves as potential change agents because they’re looking for what’s not working and wanting to be a part of that change as opposed to just buying into existing systems. Maybe the lights will go on because of the situation or critical event or a personal event that happens down the road. [Wendy]

Several participants raised cultural issues as central to our interpretations of
citizenship. Shauna’s comments highlight some core differences that are important to include in any discussion of citizenship:

I think the more I understand and recognize the huge difference between Aboriginal epistemologies and views of the world and white or western views, the more I think it’s such a huge gap or difference in notions of citizenship. As I understand it First Nations talk about stewardship; they’re stewards of the land. There’s a different sense of ownership, different aesthetics, different relationships, and very different notions of what it means to be a citizen. I think the link between individualism and citizenship is really important to explore. Many Aboriginal people I know introduce themselves by saying “My great great grandmother so-and-so was this and she taught this and then her mother who was this and then her mother and then her mother and then her mother and then there’s me.” Just those simple notions about the way we introduce ourselves to the world shows a different set of relations governing our identity. It links up with so many other fundamental questions about how we’ve been shaped and maybe bent out of shape by western notions of individuals and citizenship and ownership rights, and public and private. Different cultures have very different understandings of those concepts and relationships.

Susan’s comments extend Shauna’s more general discussion by looking at some of the practical consequences of these differences:

In terms of some of the content of the Feminist Legal Studies courses, citizenship is one of the underlying issues, even if we don’t talk about it as citizenship per se. How do we think about equality and empowering different people, and is it possible to empower all groups at once, or do you prioritize certain things and how does that play out politically? . . . Here’s a practical example. The Admissions Policy. Who gets to get into law school? It’s highly competitive. It’s very grades oriented still, although we now have a couple of discretionary categories that allow you to look at a person more in their holistic self as opposed to just what their grades were. But traditionally it’s been very much a number crunching exercise. You choose the supposedly best students based on whether they got ‘A’s or not in their undergraduates degrees. That raises a whole bunch of issues about who gets to practice law and in turn what sort of service their clients, the citizens are getting. A number of us have been arguing for awhile that we should have an admissions policy that prioritizes some form of affirmative action, and that’s happened a little bit for students who apply under the First Nations admission category in this law faculty. In the context of legal education, who has access to law school is a really important issue for citizenship partly because we are mostly training people to go out and provide services and, sometimes, make change. I said some things about how law can’t solve all our problems earlier, but at the same time it’s a really powerful social tool. It’s about who are you empowering to use that tool. [Susan]
Susan’s discussion of Admissions Policies reminded me how we are complicit in the maintenance of institutional barriers even as we vehemently oppose them in our classrooms. I want to draw a parallel between this discussion of cultural differences and the issues of power and access that characterize these differences and issues associated with gender:

One thing that can happen is that feminist students who come in to law school and manage to really hang on to their feminism through it and take interesting courses that help them develop a feminist analysis of law, find there are hardly any jobs out there that actually let them use these tools in an interesting way... Then there’s a whole group of feminist women students who don’t incorporate feminism as thoroughly in their lives as other women. Those students are sometimes more easily able to do a job that might somehow sever their feminism from their work... These women might think about feminism more in terms of how they’re treated in a law firm. Do they feel like they’re treated with equal respect and that kind of thing? But they don’t necessarily feel like they need to do feminist work, like human rights work. People take feminism away in a different form depending on how political they are. The more political feminist students seem to have a harder time finding a way to incorporate their feminism into law practice. [Susan]

“What does it mean to be a citizen in the classroom?” Feminist critiques around notions of citizenship are very interesting because many women don’t have citizenship status. They’re still viewed as clients, recipients, all these other locations within the social contract and rarely are they afforded the status of citizenship. So citizens as an idea is really deeply embedded in power and culture. [Shauna]

More generally, Marlee offers that “the law school is a very authoritarian place so there isn’t even a lot of language about citizenship, about building citizenship or educating citizens.”

At this point I want to circle back to my discussion of difference and critical discourse where I began this chapter, by talking briefly about critical thinking. As I mentioned earlier, critical thinking is often used as a proxy for educating for citizenship, and it provides an excellent entry into my more detailed discussion of pedagogical
approaches to achieving the goals associated with this educational commitment.

There is an extensive body of literature that examines critical thinking as a philosophical concept and as a pedagogical goal. In Talburt’s (2000) discussion of “thinking queer,” she notes that “in a moment in which ‘thinking’ as a term is increasingly being evacuated of meaning, ‘critical thinking’ means as many things as there are speakers who utter its refrain, and thinking is becoming increasingly divorced from our technology—enhanced desire to ‘access information,’ it may be necessary to dwell on the political dimension of what it means to think” (p. 10).

My purpose is not to delve extensively into the critical thinking literature but instead to note how critical thinking is regularly invoked as a proxy for educating for citizenship and how critical thinking was raised consistently by participants as they discussed educating for social justice. Second, critical thinking is an important component as educators engage in practices that might promote reflective solidarity in the classroom because reflective solidarity demands a persistent deconstruction of arguments made by individuals and groups.

Many participants used critical thinking as a way of operationalizing the concept of educating for citizenship; and while they used the term in a variety of ways, I think the differences varied in degree as opposed to being contradictory. These differences mirror some of the differences in perspective that characterize the theorists I cite. Some of the authors have a more liberal take on the issues, while others extend that type of analysis to emphasize a more critical discussion of the issues. Dean’s (1996) construction of reflective solidarity requires not just a commitment to critical analysis but also the skills associated with those activities.
We want people to be thinking critically about social circumstances. I think in order to be respectful citizens we have to go through that conscientization process that Paulo Freire talks about. To question where our assumptions come from and then be open minded and flexible enough to hear any other points of view and perspectives and engage in those rather than thinking that there is only a particular type of knowledge and perspective that’s accepted within academe. We need people who are much more flexible in their thinking but also critical in their thinking. And by critical I mean more of the questioning and the analysis and the synthesis that happens when you get information but at the same time being attuned to respecting individual differences and seeing diversity as opportunities not problems. To not only be stuck on the intellectual but to engage in the social and to think about the emotional too in the sense of sometimes what we say and what we do does influence others. So we need to engage our emotions in the process of learning. [Karen]

I think what happens in Science One is that they’re really talking about trying to change their philosophy about life not learning a number of facts or procedures or methodologies. . . . While it’s certainly true that they have lectures on a regular basis, they also have a number of other activities that are designed to create a community that will be a learning community. . . . So dealing with them as a whole person. It’s thinking that the learning experience is supposed to be something that’s changing the whole person and therefore everything about that experience, as much as possible, should try and deal with the person as a whole. [Maria]

There are certain skills that are part of the hidden agenda that they need. Always thinking critically, making good arguments, giving good strong presentations, working in a group, accessing information in a way that they can critically assess material, those are skills regardless of the content of the course. [Dawn]

In their discussion of critical thinking, Yescavage and Alexander (1997) focus on some of the more provocative goals of critical thinking:

[We] propose a querying of all sexual orientations as a means for students to explore and understand the complex exchanges between the personal and the political. This is the point where critical thinking can become critical self-understanding. . . . To facilitate such self-understanding, we propose a pedagogy of marking (p. 117). . . . The marking of sexual orientation, whether that be gay, straight, or bi, is an invitation not just to tolerate the non-heterosexual, but also to cast a critical glance on all configurations of the sexual within our culture. We as openly les-bi-gay teachers can focus the gaze of straight students (and colleagues, for that matter) on their own lives as well. Further, sensitized straight teachers can do the same by querying themselves and their students as members of the heterosexual default category. (p. 120)
By raising how opportunities for interrogating sexual identity differ based on an educator's own sexuality, Yescavage and Alexander (1997) raise the question of whether straight people out themselves. The authors argue that "by marking these experiences, students come to understand that so-called 'flaunting' occurs in regular discourse about our daily lives and not from (explicit) discussion of our sex lives. In other words, what would be considered 'flaunting' by homosexuals is simply articulation or perhaps clarification of one's mate preference. . . . Simply put, if we come out, we flaunt; if we don't, we lie. The only other option is to not speak of our lives at all, i.e. to not exist fully as human beings" (Yescavage & Alexander, 1997, p. 117).

I found Yescavage and Alexander's (1997) discussion of critical thinking as a passage to self-understanding to be particularly instructive on two levels. First, continuous and even relentless analysis of the construction of sexuality is an excellent vehicle for highlighting the taken-for-grantedness of so many of the frames of reference that structure and ultimately constrain our learning. Second, their focus on the critical examination of sexuality as an attempt to reach greater self-understanding was helpful to me as I reflected on participants' thoughts regarding anti-gay sentiments that were raised in classroom discussions. How might the attention to enhancing self-understanding provide for more or less room for this type of comment?

Case and Wright (1997) discuss some very interesting survey results that show overwhelming support for teaching critical thinking in elementary and secondary school classrooms but underwhelming evidence that it is being supported through practice. Clearly this lack of support is not based on reluctance to pursue it; instead "there is a more fundamental impediment, namely widespread confusion or, at least, 'haziness'
about (1) what critical thinking really means and (2) what is involved in promoting it” (Case & Wright, 1997, p. 180).

Case and Wright (1997), using a more liberal perspective, make the point that too often critical thinking is taught as one more skill as opposed to a quality of everything we do in education. In other words, we need to think about critical thinking as central to our learning as opposed to an add-on. There are numerous studies that point to classroom dynamics as more central than course content to students beginning to think more critically. Case and Wright (1997) examine one such discussion that examines the downside of a traditional debate format as a learning tool because it reinforces the right/wrong dichotomy by rewarding the ability to maintain a position instead of rewarding flexibility in reconsidering your position.

As she reflects on her pedagogical goals, Gerry echoes this emphasis on both what and how we teach through the need to acknowledge our own locations as we try to shift our lenses:

At the undergraduate level, the goal is to look at the city differently . . . a lot of it is getting the students’ confidence up to critique . . . as well as getting them to think about different ways in which a university researcher might work . . . with the community. In the third year undergraduate course, I try to get students to think about their city in critical ways . . . for example, to think about those surveillance cameras in the downtown eastside. So, it’s about getting them to see things they haven’t seen before, so they can begin to think about them. . . . So the idea is that you begin to see things that you didn’t see before and then engage in this culture of discussion and debate. . . . and remember what we’re here to do, which is to create this capacity for critical thought.

Ideally, critical thinking should provide an opportunity to explore alternative understandings of one’s worldview. Scott (1995) takes this a step further by pondering “without critical thinking, and the conflicts and contests it articulates, will there be democracy at all?” (p. 303). Jakubowski (2001) asks, “how can we facilitate critical
thinking in the classroom and make the teaching and learning process more applicable to life beyond the classroom?” [emphasis in the original] (p. 64). Again, this is the central challenge as educators try to practice in a manner that promotes educating for citizenship.

No matter how definitions of citizenship vary, there seem to be some clear themes that support Osborne's (1995) observation “that democratic citizenship demands a pedagogy that emphasizes, through practice and precept, by modeling and exhortation, by the kind of work it requires students to do, the skills and values of critical awareness, participation, involvement and community which are central to its practice” (p. 42).

**Transformative Practice and Social Agency**

Giroux (1998) argues that “critical educational work must do more than open up the space for critical exchange; it must also engage in providing those forms of ‘fugitive’ knowledge that move students and others beyond symbolic resistance to specific acts of resistance and social engagement” (p. 49). It is important that educators think about activism in a broad and inclusive manner. For example just as silence as a form of protest is invisible to many, too often the literature and educators overlook the agency that characterizes conformity by not recognizing that the decision to conform may represent as much agency as the decision not to conform. By thinking outside the box, we are able to explore a variety of strategies for change that are being invoked within and outside the classroom. Picking up on the discussion of community earlier in the chapter, one of the most common aspects of activism described by participants is connectedness to relevant communities:

I think a very pragmatic and simple idea is you keep connected with people through socialization into an activist community, not simply an academic community, but creating structures on campus to do that so that it’s not just
individual energies. [Shauna]

The connection to the real world, when it isn’t there, you get used to being disconnected and thinking that “there’s that kind of knowledge up here that’s not connected to doing and then there’s the pragmatic knowledge... the notion of citizenship shows the interconnections. [Karen]

Mohanty (1994) emphasizes the relationship between pedagogy and political activism. Yet one of the major criticisms of feminist and critical pedagogy, made by Kimball (1990) and other like-minded theorists (referred to as traditionalists in the Introduction), relates to its embrace of the political nature of education. A common response to progressive educators’ criticism of higher education’s inattention to the politics of voice, power dynamics and the selective nature of much of our official history has been fueled by the university’s claims of objectivity. Unless educators and students continue to unmask the particular subjectivities (white, male) that have served to construct our knowledge for thousands of years, we will be unable to embrace the plurality of truths that characterize our lived experiences.

Despite the widely acknowledged importance of activism and even the need to define activism in very broad terms, there were definitely some tensions that participants articulated as they operationalized activism in their own work:

Some of those students in that [education] class were critical and it was a good learning experience for me because they said that they thought I had a very limited definition of activism—that to be an activist you had to engage in a particular kind of fairly public protest. And what about everyday acts of activism, those sort of perhaps smaller and more contained moments where you’re offering a counter-discourse and disrupting things. [Shauna]

[Academic activism] can be writing a letter of support for [a community group] that allows them to do their own research. So it can be using all the legitimation, objectivity and authority that goes along with a university post to enable their activism. I don’t know why I keep making this distinction between my capabilities as a researcher as being somewhat different than their activism. Maybe there’s a nervousness about discrediting what they do and claiming what
they do as my own. I don’t do what they do, they do something totally different and powerful. So there’s a distinction that I think I need to maintain. [Gerry]

The kind of attention Gerry pays to the relationship between her research and activism is explored by Lipsitz (2000), who argues that the scholarship that is conducted in universities “helps frame the political context in which activists work. It communicates activist concerns to new audiences, and brings to social movements greatly needed evidence, analysis, and arguments” (p. 83). This discussion highlights the importance of the structures and dynamics of the university as a site for educating for citizenship:

Activism has a kind of consciousness about it. Essentially a form of awareness that gets acted upon around what you see as a particular kind of social injustice, a particular kind of power inequality. There’s also perhaps a sense of connection to others. . . . I guess at the heart of activism is both awareness based on some kind of analysis and then a form of action or resistance, and I think that can happen in a whole variety of ways. . . . I’ve been doing some reading around how to be a resisting intellectual when inside an academy as a large university like UBC which is hierarchically organized, inherently based on discrimination and issues of inequality. . . . Teaching can be an arena of activism. One of the things, if we want to look at activism that way, is to not exclude myself from that critical analysis of power relations, so to actually talk about the relations between faculty and students as part of the subject matter in a class. To look at the very context in which classes are happening. [Shauna]

The tensions that sometimes arise are those involving characterizations or caricatures of academics who are just in the clouds, thinking theoretically but not really understanding what the real on the ground issues and problems are. And then the contrasting caricature would be community activists or practitioners who are so embroiled in the day-to-day or social context to try and think about the long term implications of some of the strategic decisions that they make. So sometimes tensions can arise. [Marlee]

Just as educators are dealing with the conflict embedded in the organizational structures and relationships inherent in the university students involved in campus politics experience similar contradictions but in different ways. . . . ‘political’ organizing emphasizes educational events that replicate many of the practices of the classroom, confidence—building
confessions and dialogues that replicate therapeutic practices, and cultural events aimed at building unity and pride that replicate the practices of commercialized leisure. . . . Student politics on campus entails endless preparation for struggles that never happen because they so rarely move from talk to action. (Lipsitz, 2000, p. 83)

The disjuncture between the ideal of the university as a site of political activism and the reality of it as a site of student voice and protest is highlighted by Gerry when she notes that it is “a little quiet and we shouldn’t scurry off and have these little individual directed reading courses where individual students get plugged into community groups on their own. We need something more collective, where we get those discussions going in the classroom in a different way.”

The difficulties that have been articulated regarding the translation of theory into practice permeate all aspects of this dissertation and reinforce the argument that educators have to pay greater attention to turning our aspirations into reality. One of the most critical aspects of translating classroom activities and interactions into broader social action is the belief of individuals that they can be part of social change. Berman (1997) talks about this belief as one of efficacy, and I think this is one of the more challenging aspects of the transformation of theory into practice—both for educators and students. Echoing this dimension Maria believes that

One of the really big parts of this is confidence or belief that you’re going to succeed. And one of the things that I see quite often is that people can have the knowledge that something is possible, but they don’t really think it applies to them or they don’t really think it’s something that they can do. I think it’s often true that without knowledge, it’s very hard to have power because you have no idea what are the levers that you can push. But knowing about things is not enough. . . . So there’s something about empowerment that is different from knowledge, empowerment to act. . . . I really do think there is something between knowledge and power that has to do with an individual’s belief that they can use that knowledge to effect change.

Deirdre talked very explicitly about the need for students to feel that they can
achieve some of the ends that they seek, and at the very least have workable strategies to take into their classrooms:

A common type of group activity that I'll do is to get them to envision what an anti-sexist or non-heterosexist or anti-racist educational environment would look like because that gets them thinking about "ok, what does that mean for my practice?". Students will watch the video "It's Elementary: Talking About Gay Issues in School" and they'll be inspired to go out and do something. But one of them was telling me about doing his teaching practicum outside of Kelowna in what he described as an incredibly conservative community and he wanted to do something on homophobia with grade three or four students, and his sponsor teacher said, "No way, this will get you basically fired." So we just talked about that and I said "yeah, you can't be oblivious. You need to make sure that there's support around you if you're going to do something like this and it's never been tried. So search out allies in the school, search out allies in the community." James Chamberlain\textsuperscript{11} has really been out there taking the risks, but what he expects of other people is quite realistic. He really takes seriously the threats that some teachers face in their districts and their goal was just to get one person per district who would agree to be the point person, and they wouldn't even be identified officially as the point person and I thought 'wow, that's a lesson'. It was kind of a reality check. I think it has to be doable. If we're talking about all of this stuff and then we can't point to any examples of it, what are we doing? I think [the beginning teacher] would be full of despair too. You've got to leave people feeling like they can take some action based on their analysis of a particular injustice.

The agency of students was explored by participants in a number of different ways as participants described how they tried to lay some of the foundation for the type of activism that may be undertaken outside the classroom or after graduation. There were several comments made about the motivations and ultimately the nature of some of the activism of current students and graduates:

Ultimately what I try to do is bridge the gap [between knowledge and action] . . . showing them how the theory and critical distance can actually help them understand and decide what to do next . . . so that's the crucial connection to me. [Marlee]

\textsuperscript{11} James Chamberlain is a kindergarten teacher for the Surrey School District who has been an advocate for more inclusive approaches to education that recognize the value of GLBTQ students and families with same-sex parents. Chamberlain is the main litigant in the book banning case being heard by the Supreme Court of Canada referred to in this dissertation.
Many of the students end up forming our committees, and I can support them in some of the resources I have. My style is bringing people together and saying, “Tell me your gift and what you’d like to contribute to this team and we’ll find a place for it,” which is different than me saying, “ok, you will do this and you will do this.” [Karen]

It isn’t the knowledge that basically motivates them. I think they come already with a particular kind of commitment and you just hope that you’re giving them some tools that when they go back to their real life, they’ve built some capacity for action. But I don’t take the view that what happens in the classroom is responsible for politicizing people. I think people can become politicized taking classes, but my feeling is they’re drawn into the courses that they take with some questions to answer already. [Dawn]

For some of those women, feminists going into the practice of law, that’s going to mean being a bit of an activist in their workplace perhaps and pushing boundaries, which won’t look very radical or activist to lots of people who take activism more seriously. So I think it really depends where people are located and what their personality is. I think some people are going to press the boundaries in different ways and to a more limited extent than others. In the context of working in a system like law, activism may mean something different than if one were challenging it from the outside. [Susan]

I would love it if they [pre-service teachers] did get involved in one or more of those things—groups like the British Columbia Teacher’s Federation, Gay and Lesbian Educators of British Columbia, End Legislated Poverty, that would be success, but I don’t often get to see that. [Deirdre]

Eyre (1993) talks about the dynamics of doability and risk-taking that were raised by participants in her examination of a class discussion about heterosexism and homophobia. Students were able to recognize how various aspects of the curriculum were heterosexist because of its nonexistent, inadequate, or erroneous treatment of gay, lesbian and bisexual issues. However, unlike critics who deny this reality, these students acknowledged it but argued that it was a legitimate representation of issues given the political and social climate and the risks that were associated with addressing homosexuality in the curriculum.

Eyre (1993) notes that while most students expressed support for the argument
that discrimination should not happen, “these views were often presented with the caveat that they held ‘as long as homosexuals do not force their ‘lifestyle’ on others.’ This response suggests that students supported the heterosexist stereotype that lesbians and gay men relentlessly attempt to recruit ‘heterosexuals,’ and that students accepted heterosexuality as given rather than as a political institution” (p. 277). Eyre’s discussion is important as it reminds us of the context within which protest or agency will or will not be activated.

Given some of the challenges and risks associated with supporting activism around certain issues, many student teachers have voiced skepticism regarding the potential for them to promote social change and encourage their students to be part of this activism. Deirdre describes some of the strategies that she uses to promote an outlook that is as positive and optimistic as possible:

They can be trying to instill some “active citizenship skills” in their students, which would in turn be a form of activism. Another way I’ve modeled it this time is that I’ve led off the course with some writings by teachers who define themselves as trying to create a social justice classroom. So it’s full of examples from classroom teachers on what they do and the students have said to me with some relief, “this is great and this is something I can do.”

In line with this discussion of accessible and achievable strategies and goals, McLaren (1999) argues that even Freirean educators do not conceive of their work as an antidote to today’s sociocultural ills and the declining level of ambition with respect to contemporary society’s commitment to democracy. Rather, their efforts are patiently directed at creating counter-hegemonic sites of political struggle, radically alternative epistemological frameworks, and adversarial interpretations and cultural practices, as well as advocacy domains for disenfranchised groups. . . Like Freire, we need to restore to liberation its rightful place as the central project of education. (p. 54)

Cornelius (1998) talks about how a great deal of the community service that students are involved in is more passive in nature and often revolves around resume-
building. The potential tensions between activism and employability were illustrated in Marlee’s comments on students’ concerns regarding the “right” type of activism:

The way that our Law School has been ranked by McLean’s magazine . . . the alumni will say things like, “this law school has too many feminists, too many theoretical courses. They don’t teach the real stuff” . . . I think this has always been an issue in the last ten years, but I think where before people may think, “Should I not put this course down on my transcript? Should I not put this club down on my transcript? Should I not say that I worked on this project?”—they would ultimately put it down. I think now people are sanitizing their resumes because there’s a perception that they’ll be able to get a job more easily if they do it, and I think that’s actually true now. I’ve actually seen that happen with different people who have done that and actually went from not getting jobs to getting jobs.

I do not think this commentary by Marlee detracts from her commitment or the more general commitment to activism inherent in educating for citizenship; however, it is an important reminder that there are immediate pressures experienced by all members of the university community that shape individual responses to calls for agency.

The primary purpose of this chapter was to contextualize the philosophical conversation of citizenship in the university. It is clear that the university is characterized by tremendous energy and opportunities that promote pedagogical activities associated with social justice. At the same time, the university is experiencing a multitude of pressures involving fiscal restraint, superficial performance indicators, unprecedented retirements and demands for accountability. These pressures coupled with increasing tuition have contributed to a culture of consumerism that threatens to thwart the goal of educating for citizenship.

One of the most important themes regarding practice that surfaced in this chapter is the use of critical thinking as a proxy for educating for citizenship. I hope this chapter demonstrated that while educators use a variety of approaches to describe their efforts to
promote critical thinking, there were some important themes that necessitate merging theory and practice in ways that promote activism on the part of students.

This emphasis on the politicization of students raised important questions regarding students’ perceptions of whether they can actually do some of the things they aspire to do once they are in their communities. This discussion of the various forms of educating for citizenship that inhabit the university sets the stage for the more detailed conversation regarding the role of an educator in fostering an environment that inspires transformative pedagogy. What is most important, and not surprising, as I engage in this conversation is that there are many committed and creative educators engaging in a wide variety of exciting and progressive strategies as they resist the constraints and exploit the possibilities.
Chapter V

Shifting Relations of Teaching and Learning: Teaching as Authority, Partiality and Text

I support those critical pedagogies that emphasize the responsibility of students in contributing to their educational experience in a collaborative and reflective manner. However, there is no question that the linchpin in this enterprise is the teacher. This chapter includes an extensive discussion of power, and it is critical to examine the potential negative consequences of the power imbalance that characterizes the student/teacher relationship. It is equally important to recognize the tremendous opportunities that accompany this relationship. This chapter explores this duality of power and possibility by examining the pedagogical and curricular dynamics of educating for citizenship. My discussion of reflective accountability in Chapter 8 highlights the responsibility and power of the teacher to guide students through difficult moments. This chapter describes key elements of that responsibility by examining the centrality of the educators’ role in structuring the courses and classroom climate.

In this chapter I examine how authority, partiality and the personal shape educators’ pedagogical and curricular choices and lay the foundation for reflective solidarity and reflective accountability. The communicative principles that support the dynamics of these critical exchanges are dependent upon the relationships developed among all members of the class or learning community. Conversations characterized by differential access to power, authority, knowledge, understanding and experience shape these relationships. There is general acceptance that, irrespective of the particular approach to critical pedagogy, the educator plays the pivotal role in providing the parameters within which course-based learning occurs.
It is critical that pedagogical choices support the participatory goals of educating for citizenship. Bell, Morrow and Tastsoglou (1999) argue “that a critical, feminist, and antiracist pedagogy ought to start from the experiences of marginalized groups. Second, such a pedagogy ought to aim at developing a collective, integrative analysis of oppression(s) to explore the interlocking oppressive structures of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality. Third, such an analysis ought to be activist and geared especially to the development of a ‘multicultural politics’ for social change” (p. 24).

Discussions regarding the most effective strategies for the development of these democratic and participatory classrooms continue to be contentious, as feminist and critical theorists debate the efficacy of many of these approaches. It is important to acknowledge that the classroom is not a democracy given the power imbalances that characterize the student-teacher relationship. However, there are many ways that it is a microcosm of society as the classroom is likely to be demographically, ideologically and intellectually diverse. Petrovic (2002) takes this distinction one step further arguing that the classroom should never be described as a democracy; instead, educators should strive for democratic education which is characterized by principles that foster inclusion and non-oppression.

As I discussed in Chapter 1, I hope my dissertation will contribute to this debate by explicating some of the relationships among the educational goals related to social justice and citizenship and the teaching strategies employed to achieve these goals. Until these relationships are more fully understood, there are a range of legitimate challenges not only to the practicality of these pedagogical claims but also the desirability of the goals embodied in these approaches. Ellsworth’s (1989) criticisms of critical pedagogy
as being potentially destructive to both students and the ultimate goals of an emancipatory education represent one of these challenges.

Ellsworth (1989) makes the provocative assertion “that key assumptions, goals, and pedagogical practices fundamental to the literature on critical pedagogy—namely, ‘empowerment,’ ‘student voice,’ ‘dialogue,’ and even the term ‘critical’—are repressive myths that perpetuate relations of domination” (p. 301). Ellsworth (1989) focuses on three themes. First, she highlights the need for more research that explores the consequences of critical pedagogy. Most importantly, she asks if these strategies make a difference in the dismantling of oppressive forces outside as well as inside the classroom. Second, she problematizes the uncritical inclusion of personal or lived experience in the curriculum. Finally, Ellsworth (1989) argues that attempts, through critical pedagogy, to neutralize the obvious power differentials in the classroom are destructive to both students and ultimately the goals of an emancipatory education. All three of these criticisms of critical pedagogy are equally important to an examination of the possibility and potential of reflective solidarity within the university as they examine the roles and responsibilities of the teacher. Ellsworth’s discussion emphasizes the relations of power that are inherent in teaching and learning and how claims to lived experience have been incorporated in feminist and critical approaches to learning. Although I approach the issues raised by Ellsworth with greater optimism, she does raise critical points that continue to be the nexus of a great deal of the discussion surrounding critical pedagogy. I think my confidence is based on the belief that there are many pedagogical goals and strategies related to social justice that can be realized because of the power that educators wield in the classroom. My discussion of reflective accountability is rooted in that
optimism. The issues of power and the personal in the classroom are centrally important to my discussion of reflective accountability in Chapter 8. I would like to explore these constructs by talking about (a) the power and authority of the teacher, (b) the teacher as learner, and (c) the teacher as text and the role of the personal.

The Power and Authority of the Teacher: Negotiating Competing Expectations

In an acknowledgment of the power dynamics in education, Nussbaum (1997) argues that “the most important ingredient of a Socratic classroom is obviously the instructor. No curricular formula will take the place of provocative and perceptive teaching that arouses the mind” (p. 41). Educators might differ in the specifics of our discussions of power; however, it is impossible to deny that the teacher has an incredibly privileged position infused with power on a variety of levels. In many ways, this thesis is asking the question: What do we do with that power?

In my discussion of power and authority, I highlight the interconnectedness of power and voice, the harm that can result in educational settings, and the invocation of authority in curricular choices and evaluative practices. Finally, I examine how the principles inherent in reflective solidarity may facilitate the oftentimes difficult negotiation of dynamics of power and authority.

In her discussion of authority, Smith (1994) discusses hooks’ negotiation of power in the classroom. She observes that “while the classroom participation of every student is important for hooks, she does not necessarily think every student has something valuable to say. . . . On the contrary, she assumes that students may very well be stuck in a kind of monovision that is racist, sexist and homophobic, among other things. Rather than valuing student utterances as worthwhile in themselves, hooks values
them as markers of students' consciousness—something to work on, critique, analyze, resist” (p. 18). hooks suggests that “unlike the stereotypical feminist model that suggests women best come to voice in an atmosphere of safety . . . I encourage students to work at coming to voice in an atmosphere where they may be afraid or see themselves at risk” (cited in Smith, 1994, p. 18). I would like to discuss aspects of power and authority in the classroom and pedagogical approaches to negotiating these dynamics found in the literature and the participants’ comments. Finally, I discuss the importance of these dynamics in shaping the milieu within which efforts to educate for social justice thrive.

Jakubowski (2001) argues we need to reconceptualize the power relationship between students and faculty so that all are treated as social equals. According to Jakubowski, students and teachers “will have equally significant, albeit different roles to play as teaching and learning unfolds” (p. 65). Jakubowski (2001) qualifies her argument by noting that “this type of student empowerment does not mean that the teacher is automatically disempowered” (p. 65). However, her emphasis on the possibilities of empowering students, marginalizes the very real consequences of the power imbalance and the responsibilities that accompany an educator’s power. Too often we refuse to acknowledge the power in our classrooms because of our focus on a student-centered classroom when “in fact, our very presence as teachers gives us some power in our classrooms no matter where we sit or who leads the discussion” (Smith, 1994, p. 19).

Tom’s (1997) examination of the deliberate relationship is instructive in this discussion. She examines the approach where “teachers are encouraged to minimize power differentials between themselves and their students and to emphasize commonality and friendship with students in an attempt to equalize or disavow power imbalances” (p.
Tom (1997) refers to this strategy as a “response of denial” (p. 8). This critique of minimalizing the embeddedness and consequences of unequal power relations echoes the cautionary remarks of Ellsworth (1989). In place of this approach, Tom (1997) suggests the “frame of the deliberate relationship” which is composed of the “acknowledgment of the rewards of teaching; awareness of power; maintenance of limits; recognition of the dynamic nature of power relationships; transparency of practice; and personal presence” (p. 3).

The concepts of power and authority are often used interchangeably and a number of the participants acknowledged that there are opportunities and constraints embedded in both of these concepts. I use authority to refer to the legitimacy derived from the position of power that an educator occupies, whereby their decisions and positions have weight because of the professional position they occupy and the assumptions and responsibilities that are associated with that position. There are countless pedagogical strategies that emphasize power-sharing in curricular and classroom decision-making; however, ultimately the teacher has the final authority regarding grading practices, due dates, and curricula (Briskin, 1998). Tom (1997) argues that “we cannot relinquish our power in existing educational institutions and relationships. Thus attempts to disavow our authority are confusing and inauthentic” (pp. 11-12).

Noddings’ (1994) prominent conceptualization of how feminist educators may negotiate the power dynamics in the classroom addresses the ideal of caring and its preeminence in the classroom. Her discussion raises a number of interesting questions related to educating for citizenship, including the role of the professor as it relates to safety or comfort. In asserting the need for teachers to teach from an ethic of care,
Noddings (1994) argues that “teachers like mothers, want to produce acceptable persons—persons who will support worthy institutions, live compassionately, work productively but not obsessively, care for older and younger generations, be admired, trusted, and respected” (p. 176). Dawn talked about her experience with the maternal tug that infiltrates her pedagogy as she negotiates her relationships with her students:

I tell the students I have a structured position over them. I mean no matter how comfortable I try to make them feel, I’m giving them a grade at the end of the year—pass or fail. You set up this situation where it’s like the students just feel they need your approval or something. You’re like a mum. That’s not good. I don’t think that’s necessarily the best kind of relationship to have with students to make them learn. . . . So there’s a lot of tension around feminist pedagogy. I do agree we should be building students’ self-esteem, but it’s more complicated than that if their self-esteem is linked up totally to their grade or their comfort in the classroom. . . . I find grading difficult as a teacher—I’m sort of maternal. I want to satisfy everybody. I want to bring the whole group along.

Dawn’s comments highlight the existence of expectations related to care and nurturing that are part of many feminist approaches at the same time as she challenges some of these assumptions. I argue that the ethic of care (Held, 1995; Noddings, 1994) raises the problem that is explored in many discussions of safety in the classroom—who will be cared for when there are competing definitions of safety and care in any classroom? The reason that I have raised the ethic of care, in an admittedly truncated fashion, is that while Dean’s analysis talks about the centrality of conflict in developing solidarity, she also seems to imply that there will be some care-taking, perhaps through understanding, that will maintain relationships throughout conflict.

In a different take on the maternal elements of teaching, Robertson (1994) argues that the “teacher-as-midwife metaphor is instructive and powerful for all teachers. . . . The aim of faculty teaching in teacher education programs should be to act as midwives in order to enable prospective teachers to give birth to themselves as teachers-as-
midwives” (p. 11). Deirdre talked about this responsibility as

satisfying a desire in me to try to promote social change. Because if you can
influence a class of student teachers, then hopefully they’ll go out and do some
things in their classrooms. . . . I want student teachers to realize that there’s a
political, moral dimension to teaching, it’s not just a set of technical skills. And
that’s a bit of a hard sell because when most student teachers are at the beginning
of their career, they just want to survive in a classroom so they’re thinking in
terms of “How am I going to maintain control?” “How am I going to get through
the day?” Some of the issues that we’re raising in the Analysis of Education
course are more conceptual and political and seem important on one level for the
students, but they think they can get at them later in their career. . . . I guess
another key part of my philosophy though is that I’m a big supporter of public
education and I see it as under attack so I worry that we’re not talking enough to
people about why public school is important and the role that it plays in producing
critical thinkers who participate in a democracy. . . . I want to get them thinking
about themselves as future leaders within their school.

Noddings’ (1994) work raises some important questions with respect to the
efficacy and desirability of the ethics of care as a primary position from which to teach.

There is an assumption that all teachers have the ability to teach from the ethic of care
and that caring can be taught. Noddings assumes that teachers will embrace the ethic of
care and that the definitions of care can be agreed upon with some degree of consistency.

It is critical that we consider the issues of power that exist in the classroom that are likely
to interfere with the relation of care. Too often educators are seen as facilitators,
mediators or objective authorities who do not or should not have a stake in the
discussions in the classroom. It is critical that we examine the costs and risks associated
with teaching in ways that encourage a more nurturing engagement and those that
necessitate a more critical, uncertain approach, as both of these broad characterizations
require that educators teach from a place of vulnerability.

A number of the participants talked about the reality and indeed necessity of
having difficult teachable moments. The participants grappled with how and when to
invoke their authority. Marlee's comments reflect some of the considerations raised by other participants:

Sometimes things happen, somebody says something that's quite problematic and as a teacher I don't usually jump in right away. I will usually leave a little tiny bit of space to see if anyone wants to address what has just happened. . . . I play between being too overbearing so other people don't speak and not saying anything. . . . It's something that I'm always dealing with. Unfortunately, my silence sometimes results in unintended pressure on individuals—perhaps even more marginalized students—to speak out. The other power dynamic, though, is just me as a professor and the other people as students, and I think that over time that was more difficult for me to take on—exerting my power in appropriate ways. It's easier for me now because I've been doing it for awhile and I feel more secure and more confident about what I choose to do and what I choose to say.

Hotelling and Schulteis (1997) explore the complexities of power in their discussion of a classroom encounter in which anti-gay comments were made by a student. They contend that they “were faced with the dilemma of responding viscerally to the content of his contribution versus legitimating his right to speak. The rest of the students also paused at this moment to gauge [their] reaction. While we don't hide our own positions in class, arguing from those positions here would have foreclosed a rich opportunity for critical rather than reactionary analysis” (p. 130). In justifying their seemingly permissive response, which provided room for the student’s anti-gay remarks, Hotelling and Schulteis (1997) differentiate between a critical and a reactionary analysis and argue that the latter would have shut down a potentially productive dialogue. While I have wrestled with similar moments, I have come to believe a general tendency to provide room for all voices serves to perpetuate discriminatory views by too often treating them as simply one of many positions. Instead, I think there is the potential to enter into an equally instructive dialogue by silencing (in a variety of ways) some voices in an effort to signal that all perspectives are not worthy of equal classroom space.
Shauna’s discussion of these tensions was particularly interesting as it reiterated Marlee’s efforts to balance her desire to leave room for students to take on other students, while at the same time fulfilling her responsibilities as the teacher. It also reinforced Hotelling and Schulteis’ (1997) observations regarding the dynamics to be considered in providing space for oppressive points of view and how these dynamics are shaped by the expectations of the teacher held by students:

I’ve had various successes and failures with the whole issue of challenging the situation when I think there is some silencing and domination going on. I think that’s quite tricky because it’s good to create space where the students are also feeling that they have some power and responsibility for challenging those moments as well, although I know ultimately I am the one that has the authority and the responsibility for that. I remember there was one situation where a student made a comment, and it was an older white male student. It was a very large methodology class and his comments were something like. “Well, gee I guess I’d be in a much better position if I were (a) a woman, (b) black and (c) disabled.” And there were two women of colour in the course. And he just got jumped on by the students for his comment. People just said “Wait a minute here,” and I was so pleased with that because people were uncomfortable with his remarks and told him so. I was very conscious of this African woman in the class and how she was feeling. But at that moment I actually didn’t add much to the conversation because others were raising the issues. But then later I know some students were disappointed in me and I think probably in retrospect I also should have said something because people were still looking to me as the person with some authority to signal his comments as an issue and a problem. So I think it was both good and bad. It was good that clearly we had created enough conversation around the climate in the classroom that people were wanting to say, “I’m feeling uncomfortable with that remark.” But in that case I wished I’d played a more vocal role. [Shauna]

Shauna’s comments illustrate the power of classroom exchanges and the importance of the teacher in these exchanges. I believe the type of comments made by Shauna’s student as well as even more offensive classroom offerings are compelling tests for the value of Dean’s reflective solidarity as a model of classroom dynamics. With Dean’s emphasis so squarely placed on the interactional dynamics, there does seem to be a void regarding the substance of the contributions to which I will return throughout the
dissertation.

Gerry discussed the potential of student-led interrogation of contentious course content, while at the same time offering an important reminder about the risks associated with withdrawing professorial power from the equation:

There's something about working with classmates, too, and hearing their classmates take these ideas seriously that I think pulls them in, in a way that if it came from me, it wouldn't be so easy. One that didn't work well was the issue of racism this year, and I thought in some ways I relied too much on the students to deal with that issue. I felt really badly because it was in the student-led discussion groups that I felt like I subjected some of them to a lot of racist junk that they just shouldn't have had to listen to in a classroom context. So all this racist commentary came out in the discussion group and even though you want this space to be a very open space for all sorts of things, you don't want a certain category of student to have to hear this stuff. It's just ridiculous. So there's a fine line. Non-white students have to face it in other parts of their lives, right? And I wasn't there to referee.

Cornwell (1998) eloquently zeros in on this problem of the content of remarks and the consequences for pedagogical strategies in her discussion of hate speech. She argues that

A feminist classroom collaboratively seeks a cooperative and negotiated effort to deal with hate speech. For the victim it means having the voice and power to name the injury and give it meaning above and beyond the received universal truth and assumption that words do not harm.... It means removing from the educational pedestal the blanket notion of the sanctity and equal value of all speech in an educational setting, and believing that discrimination between forms of speech can be made in a critical manner and with an emancipatory focus. (p. 115)

Acknowledging the dilemmas in definition, I would extend Cornwell's analysis beyond the presumptive legal definition of hate speech to a more critical and admittedly broader use of the term:

When I'm teaching and we're actually engaging with the issues that are volatile and controversial, I think the main responsibility is on me in the sense that if people say things that are hurtful or problematic or totally crazy, which sometimes happens, I have to be right there to take it on. [Marlee]
Admittedly, making these distinctions among comments is very difficult territory; however, I think my focus on accountability in Chapter 8 will facilitate the interrogation of these types of normative judgments. Running through all of these stories is the palpable tension of wanting to provide space for students to express their points of view, and to address and challenge the position or ideas of other students, but at the same time not abandoning the very real authority of the teacher. Because of our authority, our verbal and non-verbal responses are critical to shaping the climate within which these sometimes difficult discussions take place.

Ultimately, no matter what strategies we utilize, Shauna asks

If you really want to engage authentically in those kinds of dialogical conversations with your students, what happens to your power and authority? . . . I think we really struggle to create environments where you can encourage very strong differences of opinion and the outcome is actually about learning, about a deeper understanding, where you’re actually hearing each other and not simply maintaining your own position because you’re ideologically correct. So I think for me that would probably be the long-standing goal—to create that kind of classroom structure and set of skills where you can have those kinds of dialogic encounters.

Nussbaum (1997) highlights the positive potential of critical discourse and a climate conducive to reflective solidarity. She argues that “there is no more effective way to wake pupils up than to confront them with difference in an area where they had previously thought their own ways neutral, necessary, and natural” (p. 33). I talked about difference at great length in the previous two chapters, and Shauna highlights aspects of difference in her experience:

At times I actually halt a conversation and say, “I think it’s time to hear from other people” and have really pissed people off doing that—But I think it was appropriate. . . . When I think of some moments last year in 314 [an introductory teacher education course] I really tried to draw attention to language and how important it is and how it actually can create or construct experiences and form identities with people and students would just get fed up with me. Students would
say “they’re just words,” “this is too much political correctness and it actually shuts down the conversation,” “the more you point out the power of language, the more I feel silenced.”

In an effort to crystallize some of the key tenets of feminist pedagogy that continue to surface in the literature, Robertson (1994) posits that

Collectively their [feminist authors’] work defines a feminist teacher as one who works consciously: to dismantle hierarchical structures; to foster community within each classroom group; to awaken students to the oppression of women and other minority groups; to engage students in active discussion; to put the teaching into the context of the students’ lives and experiences; and to empower students with the understanding that knowledge is not neutral, but instead, a bringing together of the personal, the social, and the political. While each of these strategies has been used by all good teachers, together they represent a radical change in pedagogy. (p. 11)

My primary focus in the discussion of power and authority has been on classroom exchanges; however, two of the most critical symbols of an educator’s power and authority are curricular design and the assignment of grades.

_Professorial Responsibilities: Curricular and Evaluative Implications_

I acknowledge that the lines between the who, what and why of pedagogy and curriculum are porous and shifting, but I want to spend some time talking more specifically about what we teach. Pedagogical choices regarding what and how we teach are intricately connected to the likelihood of educators attaining their goals of citizenship education and the nature and extent of resistance we will experience in response to these efforts. Ultimately, my argument regarding reflective accountability emphasizes the importance of the substance of our conversations in determining the space provided for different points of view. With this goal in mind, I want to discuss some of the more interesting curricular issues that have been raised in the name of critical approaches to education.
While Dean's (1996) reflective solidarity emphasizes process, an examination of the substance of the curriculum is vital to illustrate the potential of reflective solidarity to illuminate classroom discourse and the challenges associated with Dean's primary focus on critical exchange independent of content. Mohanty (1994) argues that the classroom needs to be understood as a microcosm of society within which knowledge is constructed and reconstructed, power relations are reinforced and resisted, and societal order is perpetuated and challenged. She contends that women's studies programs and diversity workshops provide examples of the "individualization of race" (p. 162) and gender that have further marginalized the collective voices of dissent of First and Third World women. Mohanty (1994) argues that critical pedagogy is central to actively deconstructing the racist, sexist and heterosexist curriculum that characterizes our educational institutions.

The organizational philosophies and structures that characterize universities are often responsible for simultaneously constraining and encouraging inclusive publics and counter-publics. The traditional principles surrounding the pursuit of knowledge often serve to de-legitimize efforts to construct more inclusive approaches to curriculum development and teaching strategies. I argue that universities have a unique opportunity to foster political involvement, in the spirit of reflective solidarity through their development of more inclusive public spaces and increased support of democratic counter-public activities. Curricular and pedagogical choices and goals play a critical role in the potential of these sites of democratic discourse.

The organizational responses to many inequities do not take into account that the university was established to educate a specific and exclusive set of citizens and therefore
the teaching strategies and curricular trends that have remained relatively unchanged for hundreds of years may not respect the different learning styles and needs that women and other minorities bring to the classroom (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). For example, the power imbalances that generally characterize the student-teacher relationship have been repeatedly challenged by a variety of critical and feminist pedagogical approaches (Gaskell & McLaren, 1991; Tom, 1997; Wilson, 1991). These strategies endorse a more communal approach to teaching and learning that reflects the experiences of all of the participants as opposed to simply those who hold power.

Individuals and groups that have been marginalized in modern universities are demanding a voice in the classrooms, labs and meeting rooms of the academy. Traditional understandings of "legitimate" knowledge and pedagogy are being challenged, and these challenges strike at the very core of many of the tenets of the modern university. The responses to these critiques have been vigorous, often embodied in more global discussions of the role of the university, and have resulted in an escalation of accusations of political correctness as a weapon against calls for inclusion and equality (Bloom, 1987; D'Souza, 1991; Emberley, 1996; Kimball, 1990).

Despite these criticisms, feminist academics continue to restructure curriculum to reflect more accurately multiple subjectivities and sites of learning. Britzman (1995) provides an interesting analysis of some of these efforts by arguing that it is in fact knowledge that feeds resistance. Britzman contends that

Pedagogical thought must begin to acknowledge that receiving knowledge is a problem for the learner and the teacher, particularly when the knowledge one already possesses or is possessed by works as an entitlement to one's ignorance or when the knowledge encountered cannot be incorporated because it disrupts how the self might imagine itself and others. These dynamics, quite familiar in contexts where multiculturalism is constituted as a special interest, are not
resistance to knowledge. Rather it is knowledge that is a form of resistance. (p. 159)

The critical question that arises out of this observation revolves around the potential of conflicting knowledge to jar previously held positions and how a commitment to reflective solidarity (and in some cases reflective accountability) might support individuals through these moments. Connected to this position is the equally unsettling experience (for some students) of challenging claims to truth. Dawn and Susan describe some of the tensions inherent in introducing these approaches:

Often students want answers and they don’t like having to figure it out for themselves. A lot of them don’t get it when you say that “your education isn’t about learning more facts.” I try to talk to them about the difference between facts and knowledge. Some of them get it, some of them don’t. [Dawn]

I think students who want to have the law just told to them would argue that I am too open-ended. That I don’t give them enough basics . . . one of my colleagues calls it the berries. The little nuggets of knowledge they’re supposed to have or they think they’re supposed to have. [Susan]

In her discussion of the importance of what is taught, Adrienne Rich argues that “[w]hen you read or hear about ‘great issues’, ‘major texts’, ‘the mainstream of western thought’, you are hearing about what men, above all white men, in their male subjectivity, have decided is important” (quoted in Gaskell & McLaren, 1991, p. 225). There is widespread agreement that there is a general absence of curriculum-related material that reflects, supports and celebrates diversity including the experiences of women, aboriginals and gay men and lesbians (Courtenay-Hall, 1993; Gaskell & McLaren, 1991; The Chilly Collective, 1995; Wilson, 1991). Despite documentation, critics argue that these claims for inclusivity are based on political ideology and should not guide curriculum decisions. Not surprisingly, there is not a parallel recognition of the political nature of the traditional curriculum (Kimball, 1990; Rothman, 1993).
The consequences of male-dominated activities of knowledge construction highlighted by Rich (in Gaskell & McLaren, 1991) include value-laden decisions regarding the selection of research topics and participants, methodologies, and the interpretations of research results (Makosky & Paludi, 1990). Assessments of the magnitude of these influences and the possible consequences have been captured in numerous studies which explore variables such as "the number of female characters in elementary school readers, the number of female authors on the reading list, the number of women mentioned in a history text, [and] the number of women in tenured university positions who are responsible for creating scholarship" (Gaskell & McLaren, 1991, p. 224). Shauna describes one of her strategies aimed at developing a more inclusive and responsive curriculum:

It's a pretty traditional thing. I develop a curriculum ahead of time. Although I've come more and more to want to suspend making something really concrete until I actually get a sense of who's in the class and what they want to know. But obviously it has to be bracketed by the subject matter you are supposed to be teaching. So really bringing in people's own experiences and perspectives is important. But also doing that critically so we engage in a process of looking at our own thoughts and practices including myself in a critical way.

In her efforts to highlight the importance of difference and the significance of the filters that shape university curriculum, Deirdre used an exercise she called a summary critique that helps them hone their abilities to recognize different ideological positions. So for a set number of readings they have to do a few things: summarize the main argument, identify the author's ideological perspective, critique the argument and give me the reasons why they've done it that way—and it's quite structured.

Deirdre's curricular exercise is an example of how educators can encourage students to try to examine an issue from a different location. Dean's concept of a situated, hypothetical third highlights the importance of this emphasis on positionality in
developing reflective solidarity. I argue that in order to encourage the development of good citizens, there must be a concerted effort to reflect greater diversity in the lived experiences represented in university settings. It is through this recognition, exploration, and exchange that a foundation may be laid for participation in political activities.

One of the most often discussed responses to demands for inclusion within higher education are specialized courses and programs such as women’s studies programs. McIntosh (1989) makes the important point that there is a need for women’s studies not because of some abstract need to be more inclusive but instead because of our need to ensure scholarly accuracy. McIntosh argues that women’s studies programs are fundamental to meaningful curriculum transformation within higher education. Dawn touches on this epistemological need for women’s studies by arguing that

It is necessary to have a space dedicated to feminist scholarship and the discourse and an audience because you can’t advance knowledge every time you go to give a seminar or something where you have to explain why you’re doing it from a feminist perspective and not have an audience that can engage at that level. But at the same time we’ve always hoped that having the Centre and having the women’s studies program wouldn’t end up ghettoizing it. And I don’t think it has.

Wendy had a very different perspective from Dawn as she described her efforts to find supportive colleagues:

I’ve been here for eight years and it took me a long time to find somebody else on campus who’s interested in similar areas. It’s difficult. For example if you get a visiting scholar appointment over in women’s studies you know that you’re going to have to get up and do the formal talk thing where you are probably going to get critiqued from all over. That’s fine but it’s not that collaborative. Often times you walk out of there just thinking the work that you’re doing is just awful and that’s coming from other feminists on campus. It’s not always a positive, building kind of experience.

Although Wendy’s comments reflected her experience as opposed to her position on women’s studies programs in general, her comments are instructive as too often we
make assumptions that this type of initiative will always be perceived as collaborative. In contrast to Wendy’s experience, Dawn told the focus group that “the Women’s Studies community is a more nurturing community and we tend to take care of each other and I think a little bit better care of our students.”

McIntosh (1989) discusses the need for curricular reconstruction by focusing on the role of women’s studies programs in colleges and universities in the United States. She discusses the form that certain disciplines might take as their gender content is “balanced.” There is a role for courses and programs that emphasize gender and feminist theory; however, to argue that women’s studies programs, as they are constituted, are the most important aspect of gender balancing within the curriculum is too simplistic and provides these programs with uncontested support for their claims of efficacy. Wendy’s perceptions raise questions that are found in Patai and Koertge’s (1994) discussion of women’s studies programs. Patai and Koertge (1994) argue that these programs are too often characterized by “‘ideological policing,’ ‘intolerance,’ [and] ‘dogmatism’” (p. xv).

I disagree with McIntosh’s (1989) view of women’s studies programs as the most central vehicles for change within the university, particularly in relation to supporting citizenship. However, these programs are often positioned as subaltern counter-publics (Fraser, 1997b) and have the potential to produce some very creative contributions to institutional change. The marginalized status of women’s studies programs within many universities allows, in theory, the opportunity for experimentation with unconventional teaching methods and research projects away from the gaze of administration. The critical question relates to what circumstances need to be in place in order for this type of cooperative risk to be taken. The hazard is that the marginalized status of these programs
may promote an atmosphere that is focused on gaining legitimacy within the mainstream of academe instead of taking advantage of their existence on the edge. It is from this peripheral position that people within women’s studies programs have the potential to think more critically about citizenship education and provide opportunities for the type of action that is based on invigorating and passionate debate characteristic of reflective solidarity. It is within these counter-publics that individuals strategize to influence wider publics.

Britzman (1995) raises the concern that too often discussions of marginalized groups such as lesbians and gay men are added on in a well-intentioned way that tries to promote understanding and seeks achievable ends; however, too often

The case of how gay and lesbian studies has been treated in a sentimental education that attempts to be anti-homophobic serves as my example of where arguments for inclusion produce the very exclusions they are meant to cure. Part of the tension is that in discourses of inclusion, there tend to be only two pedagogical strategies: provisions of information and techniques for attitudinal change. These two strategies are emblematic of the limitations produced when gay and lesbian subjects are reduced to the problem of remedying homophobia, a conceptualization that stalls within a humanist psychological discourse of individual fear of homosexuality as abject contagion and shuts out an examination of how the very term homophobia as a discourse centers heterosexuality as the normal. (p. 158)

In a parallel discussion Collins (1993) focuses on the marginalization of Black feminist thought through various mechanisms associated with the academy and its “community of experts” (p. 93). Once again the debate with respect to qualitative methodologies is raised as a vehicle for the delegitimization of many feminist studies. Collins develops four key aspects of an Afrocentric feminist epistemology (the importance of lived experience, the use of dialogue in assessing knowledge claims, the ethic of caring, and the ethic of personal accountability), all of which challenge the
current processes of knowledge legitimation. Collins (1993) is constantly questioning the
applicability of the elements of an Afrocentric epistemology to a women’s epistemology.
This technique heightens our sensibilities with respect to the taken-for-granted
assumptions regarding shared experiences of domination yet at the same time it embraces
the potentially productive nature of these shared experiences and the possibilities
associated with Dean’s efforts to move beyond identity politics.

So where do we go from here in terms of curriculum? Mayberry (1999) notes that
“in response [to low numbers of minorities], some science educators across the country
are employing new pedagogical approaches and curricular materials in hopes of
developing learning environments and course materials that are more inclusive of the rich
perspectives, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds of an increasingly diverse student
population” (p. 1). In reference to First Nations education in the university, Jo-ann
contends

the challenges are creating awareness for the need [for First Nations content in the
university curriculum]. At first, it meant pushing to try and make a more
respectful place for our knowledge within some of the core courses. I mean it’s
fine if you’re on the periphery and you’re an elective but to get a course that is
part of a core program: We don’t have that yet.

No matter what the impetus, this type of attention to curricular and pedagogical
innovation is essential if reflective solidarity or reflective accountability are to be viewed
as helpful concepts around which educators may promote educating for citizenship.

Not surprisingly, the area where efforts to alter the traditional dynamics of the
university classroom run into the greatest difficulty is evaluation. Shauna and Karen
articulate some of the dynamics of this struggle:

Well I think that’s actually where we’re stuck, [evaluation] is where I get stuck.
In many ways you sort of default to an old style of evaluating student’s work and
it's not respectful of the holistic approach. It’s not respectful of different approaches to learning. But at the same time, say at the graduate level, there’s a certain level of cognitive and intellectual skills that are demanded, and if we didn’t make sure students had those, we wouldn’t be doing a good job teaching or advising them. I think there’s some room to actually try to do evaluation a little differently. So “What does a dialogical democratic evaluation process look like?” I’m not sure, but I think maybe it’s learning contracts, maybe collective activities, which is more than just simply group projects which have a real dark under-belly to them there’s some very clear limitations to making evaluation a more democratic process. I think you’ve got a responsibility . . . because evaluation isn’t just a regulatory practice, a great deal of it is, but it’s hopefully about learning to think. So I try to map out certain kinds of assignments that directly relate to learning and I try to have clear criteria for evaluation. . . . So the diversity of options is important but never losing sight of the rules, you know the regimes of truth of this place. [Shauna]

What I do within the system, which isn’t easy to do, is portfolios. I encourage sharing a lot. We do some writing and then read to each other what we’ve written and I don’t need to mark it. I don’t need to grade it, it’s just a part of what we do. . . . the grading part is excruciating when you do good pedagogy. . . . I think sometimes by fourth year or graduate school some students can really be pissed off by saying “Nobody fostered my thinking and now I’m supposed to do this and I’m angry that I’ve come through fifteen years of education and I can’t be creative anymore”. . . . I’ve heard UBC described once by a colleague it’s the shoe factory and one size fits all, and I think to some extent that’s true. [Karen]

These comments remind educators of the organizational and societal factors that constrain and support innovative approaches to teaching and learning in the university. It is very difficult to reorganize your curricular goals in a way that minimizes the importance of traditional grading practices, when the university continues to emphasize the primacy of grades in its reward structures. I want to extend this reality check to my examination of reflective solidarity and point out that Dean has not adequately addressed the contexts within which these dialogues are occurring. Reflective solidarity seems to be based on assumptions of “all things being equal.” However, the reality is that every issue has different stakes and is characterized by differing access to the issue and the discussion.
A number of the participants described their efforts to be more creative in their grading practices, despite a theme of dismay at the difficulties that seemed to be embedded in the translation of pedagogical goals into equally progressive evaluation criteria:

I try to give lots of different assignments so there are assignments that are going to speak to the aptitudes of the different students and I have thought about giving them some choice through learning contracts. I’m sure they’d like that and it would provide a sense of taking ownership. [Gerry]

Even presentations, how do you evaluate those? And when you engage in something that does feel more personal, you have to be careful. Are you actually evaluating that individual because it sure feels like that when you’re evaluating the choice they’ve made about something. We often make the distinction, “This is a commentary on your beliefs and your ability to make an argument, not on you.” I don’t think it’s a straightforward thing to distinguish between someone’s work and someone’s identity. [Shauna]

So once again, we come back to the historical and organizational expectations that are implicitly and explicitly woven throughout an individual’s experience. Ellsworth’s (1989) critique of critical pedagogy is reinforced by these realities. How much can we change in postsecondary education if the framework of grading and evaluation is unchallenged? While I acknowledge that these structural limitations are frustrating and potentially counter-productive, I am optimistic about the potential of more critical pedagogical approaches.

In summary, the key points that I explored in this discussion of power and authority were: (a) that the participants were keenly aware of potential hazards as they negotiated a range of issues of power, including those related to the space for a variety of views, the space for students to challenge one another, and the opportunity for the participants to assert their authority in the face of contentious moments and issues; (b) that educators are attentive, in a variety of ways, to the care of students during potentially
harmful conversations; and, (c) that evaluation continues to be one of the most difficult sites to infuse with more innovative pedagogies. All of these issues are intricately connected to the dynamics of reflective solidarity and the potential for these ideas to contribute to more productive and responsible critical exchanges in the classroom. In the face of these power dynamics there are often assumptions by students, and too often the educators themselves, that expertise accompanies this position of authority. Although it is essential to challenge this notion of expertise, it is equally important that educators develop their areas of specialization and embrace their responsibility to provide educational leadership in those areas.

*The Teacher as Learner: Challenging the Expert Model*

One thing that informs my teaching is that I find that it is the most significant way in which I learn. So I'm very much a teacher/learner. We talked about learner-centred teaching and I have a lot of empathies toward that, but I think one of the things that doesn’t get discussed in that kind of philosophical argument is that—I’d rather call it learning-centred rather than learner-centred because I am learning just as much if not more than students. [Shauna]

In this section, I want to pursue the distinction between learner-centered and learning-centered education described by Shauna. A central aspect of this shift is the more explicit inclusion of educators as learners. The idea of the teacher as learner raises some important questions regarding institutional and student expectations of the teacher. In particular it builds on the discussion of power by exploring how partiality challenges the preeminence of the expert model. By acknowledging the teacher-as-learner, my discussion of reflective accountability becomes further complicated as educators negotiate where, when and how they invoke their authority to challenge or silence particular viewpoints.
In his discussion of contrasting manifestations of the teacher’s role, Carlson (1998) embarks on a very interesting discussion about “the preacher” versus “the expert witness” and notes that Ladwig (1996) argues that progressive theorists need to act more like expert witnesses as opposed to preachers so that they are taken seriously in mainstream academic circles. In response Carlson (1998) notes that “we are beginning to realize there is no easy way to separate the preacher from the expert witness. . . . Nor should we want to entirely. For progressives have a responsibility to speak in a ‘prophetic voice’ and engage in ‘prophetic visioning’” (p. 548). This discussion is at the heart of the debate regarding academics’ role in advocating for social change. Certainly one of the key themes of the responses to my queries about how the participants attempt to apply their philosophies of teaching and learning revolves around destabilizing this type of knowledge provider/knowledge consumer dichotomy that is invoked by the depiction of professors as experts. Most often participants tried to disrupt these relationships using some combination of overt and more subtle strategies.

Carlson’s (1998) discussion of “prophetic voice” was articulated in participants’ commitment to raise more critical points of view, ask questions that students were less well positioned to ask, and make space for more marginalized views. I believe these activities are often positioned in a manner that promotes collaborative learning and prophetic visioning. Far from an expert model, Wendy and Marlee’s comments are typical of participants who described their role as creating more collaborative learning experiences:

I guess over the almost 20 years now that I’ve been involved in teaching I’ve really shifted my teaching practices from one where I’m the expert, I have control, I make all the decisions about what’s going to be discussed and what’s worthwhile knowledge to more of a model where I try to act as a facilitator and
empower or engage students more in the discussions they’re framing. [Wendy]

I have as a pedagogical goal to disrupt the traditional way of teaching law that they are getting in most of their other classes in first year. I want to challenge students to deepen their thinking around feminist engagement with law. . . . I want to stimulate their intellectual curiosity. . . . I want to grapple with the application of theory to apropos experiences and to feminist activism. So I want them to understand the relationship between theory and action and how theory can lend insights and analysis that you can’t get without having that critical experience and that academic perspective. . . . I am there in the minute at the same time they are and I make that very clear to them. So I don’t like putting myself in the authoritative role, although I take the role of teacher very seriously, so it’s not just about them controlling things, but there’s certain things that I want to direct them to, but at the same time there’s lots of room for them, too. [Marlee]

In a slightly different context, Jo-ann described her perspective on the uniqueness of aboriginal learning:

I believe we are all learners, that everybody’s knowledge and opinion must be respected and that through reflecting and discussing in a comfortable atmosphere, we can really challenge ideas. If it’s about First Nations, the history and how that history has impacted the people especially and always to remember that we are talking about people, the humanistic aspect of what we are doing, so it’s not seen as problems or issues but that there’s people that are with these issues. There are really important aspects to our knowledge that can benefit anyone. It is a pedagogy that uses all your senses and means being quite involved in the learning. Then to get people responsible for their learning, to be actively involved and to probably pose more questions than there are answers.

This transformation of the classroom into a more communal and collaborative setting is not without its risks, some of which will be discussed in greater detail later in the dissertation. One of the consequences of moving away from a more traditional expert model of teaching and learning is the need to examine students’ willingness to accept the partial nature of knowledge generally and specifically the partiality implicit in the teacher-as-learner paradigm. A number of participants discussed this notion of uncertainty that I explore again in Chapter 7. Susan notes that students really don’t like a sense that their teacher has partial knowledge and I think that has a particular impact on women in the classroom. I feel like I’m always
struggling, trying to convey a sense that “yes, I do know what I’m talking about.” Law students are pretty anxious creatures anyway. It’s a very competitive environment. I don’t think it’s a particularly nice learning environment in most law schools. And so I think a lot of them resist that idea of partial knowledge.

Just as interesting is how teachers respond to this ever present but rarely acknowledged partiality. Karen describes how she processes the uncertainty inherent in this position:

I think another way of discussing identity is the imposter syndrome. . . . I have this fantasy and I’d love to act this out in some kind of drama. I’m sitting here in my office and these guys come in in white coats and say “We’ve found out you’re an imposter. You don’t know anything.” And they take my diploma and they start moving everything out of the room and say “You’re outta here.”

So what do we hide behind? We hide behind the articles we write, our overheads, our tenure and in the back of our mind everybody knows how much we don’t know. What am I an expert at? How can anybody be an expert at anything? And so I think hiding behind that identity is a spot of safety. It happens in graduate school when students are asking “What do I know compared to the professors?” and the professors are thinking “What do I know compared to the full professors?” We’re back here saying, “Who am I behind this wall?”

Ellsworth (1989) provides an excellent synopsis of the crevices that can be explored when partiality is acknowledged and then embraced:

Narratives about experiences of racism, ableism, elitism, fat oppression, sexism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism, and so on are partial—partial in the sense that they are unfinished, imperfect, limited; and partial in the sense that they project the interests of “one side” over others. Because those voices are partial and partisan, they must be made problematic, but not because they have broken the rules of thought of the ideal rational person by grounding their knowledge in immediate emotional, social, and psychic experiences of oppression, or are somehow lacking or too narrowly circumscribed. (pp. 306-307)

The most fundamental aspects of the teacher as learner are that educators need to:

(a) interrogate how we present our knowledge claims, (b) embrace the partiality of our knowledge, and (c) think more critically about the efficacy of our efforts to create more inclusive and collaborative classrooms. These discussions are closely connected to the previous section on power and are equally important to my use of reflective solidarity to
understand how a community of learners comes together in the university. Even with these efforts it is imperative that educators remain cognizant of the limits of these strategies within the context of unequal power that characterizes the student-teacher relationship. Carlson’s concept of “prophetic voice” is helpful as I think about how I articulate my responsibility on perspectives that are inherently heterosexist, homophobic, racist, sexist, and abliss.

*The Teacher as Text: Opportunities and Challenges of Learning Through Experience*

Dawn Currie (1992), one of the participants, emphasizes the interconnectedness of the what and how we teach by noting that “attempts to reclaim subjectivity through experiential learning, as a goal of feminist pedagogy, raises important epistemological questions” (p. 342). Currie highlights the need to declare our positions as educators. She affirms Harding’s (1991) assertions about strengthening as opposed to abandoning objectivity through including our values and dispositions and attempting to use the Other to engage more critically with our own locations. Harding’s (1991) concept of “strong objectivity requires that we investigate the relation between subject and object rather than deny the existence of, or seek unilateral control over, this relation” (p. 152).

In her discussion of “standpoint epistemology,” Currie (1992) argues that by “identifying rather than obscuring the social locatedness of author-ity and author-ship, standpoint epistemology provides a point from which to interrogate and make apparent the workings of all non-inclusive discourse” (p. 355). While there is no one standpoint that can illuminate all types of exclusion, Dean’s (1996) examination of reflective solidarity points toward a communicative model that moves individuals and groups to a higher level of mutual understanding as their discourse becomes the foundation for their
common purpose. Dean’s situated, hypothetical third is central to this enterprise. Once again, I believe the university has tremendous potential to move students and faculty toward this ideal of collective discourse and action.

Jacobs (1998) talks about “the notion of ‘the teacher as text’ as a strategy of using our personal experiences as teachers and individuals to help our students make sense of their own increasingly fragmented, partial, and unstable perceptions and practices and work toward creating more powerful understandings and actualizations of agency” (p. 222). One of the most common ways that Jacobs’ (1998) concept of teacher as text is found in the literature is in discussions of role modeling. I think role modeling, understood as the type of strategy explored by Jacobs (1998), points to the dynamic and potentially critical use of identity. In particular it is a type of activism through visibility that I argue contributes to educating for citizenship.

Britzman (1993) discusses some of the complexities of role modeling and explores the pitfalls of an overly simplistic embrace of role modeling. She highlights the need for role models to challenge and contradict societal norms and structural barriers as opposed to setting up overly individualistic models for students of what it takes to succeed. In other words, role models need to contextualize their successes within institutional power dynamics as opposed to taking the common approach that asserts “if you work hard, you’ll succeed.” The underlying and dangerous corollary of this latter approach is that “if you don’t succeed, you didn’t work hard enough.”

Britzman (1993) argues that current approaches to multicultural education (including the use of role models) erroneously focus on the individual, the development of a positive self-image, and the appreciation of diversity. Instead, attention must be
directed toward the complex interplay of race, gender, sexuality and class in the stratification of society. Britzman concludes that educators must begin to understand and articulate the impact of society's heterosexual, middle-class, white, male bias in shaping individual and group identity in order to begin to develop effective multicultural and anti-racist education curriculum, and that role modeling can play an important role in this development.

I appreciate Britzman's (1993) arguments regarding the structural imperatives that are too often ignored in all facets of our educational system. Indeed, Britzman's assertions regarding multicultural education should be extended to all corners of the curriculum as they respond to the interrelatedness of race, class, gender and sexuality in the construction and articulation of knowledge. However, I am perplexed by Britzman's (1993) apparent over-simplification and subsequent dismissal of the "role model argument." Certainly I agree that too often role models are used as a panacea and simplistic arguments are made regarding their impact; however, I believe that individuals who contradict and/or actively challenge societal norms have an important and exciting role to play in the actualization of a more diverse, inclusive, and dynamic approach to education. I found Britzman's concept of role models as those who maintain the social order as opposed to those who challenge it inadequate. Role models reconceptualized as agents of social change have historically challenged and will continue to challenge the social order. I hold no illusions regarding the pace of change; however, I do support the need for educators to put into practice this more progressive understanding of role modeling as they make themselves part of the text of their classrooms.

Perhaps Britzman's (1993) discussion of role models relates exclusively to the
role model who is parachuted into a class to “show” students that anyone can succeed if they just work hard. If this is Britzman’s only point, I wholeheartedly agree that this approach is at best ineffectual; however, my argument is that, used in this way, the concept of role model has been co-opted. I contend that Britzman’s (1993) argument falters by making the same error for which she criticizes multicultural education—she ignores the complexities of the context within which agents of social change (such as role models) operate. Through role modeling marginalized individuals and groups of individuals are gradually dismantling some of the bases of power that have continually delegitimized their existence. Given that individuals are responsible for structural changes, we are remiss if we do not recognize and indeed promote the power of individual and often prophetic voices. While Britzman (1993) may have been focusing on a specific type of role model, I found her narrow definition of role modeling problematic, because she did not speak to the specificity of her discussion.

In another critique of role modeling in the context of gay and lesbian educators, Khayatt (1997) talks about the perception that identity is fixed, and it is that stability that enables people to come out because they are able to declare that they are “something.” Khayatt presents a number of assumptions of the power of coming out:

If identity is problematic and performative, the act of coming out performs its own set of assumptions. . . . The first assumption is that students who are lesbian or gay would be gratified and encouraged to see a lesbian or a gay man as a professor. Second, there is the perennial argument of being a role model: by being out, a lesbian or gay teacher becomes a role model for students. Third, being an “out” professor unsettles the heterosexism of an institution (“we’re queer, we’re here!”). Fourth, not to come out is to institutionalize homophobia (that is, it does not challenge the heterosexual status quo). Finally, coming out is “putting one’s body on the line,” which is a prerequisite for taking political action. There are, of course, such reasons as honesty and personal integrity.  (p. 133)

In her critique of these assumptions about the power of visibility, she challenges
the idea that increasing numbers of individuals coming out will be the catalyst for change in our society by arguing that the size of the protests against racism has not eradicated that problem. Khayatt (1997) argues that it is the actions of those change agents as opposed to their numbers that will determine the impact of their protests. While Khayatt says she does not want to compare differences, she does just that. I think her critique of role modeling and other assumptions about coming out misses a fundamental difference in the oppressions that she compares. Because as homosexuals, unlike most black people, we are invisible, the very act of becoming more visible is the political activism that she contends is needed. It is because of this fundamental difference that I think discussions of visibility or role modeling are important to my discussion of reflective solidarity in the classroom and ultimately my introduction of reflective accountability.

Talburt (2000) extends some of Khayatt’s concerns regarding approaches to sexuality in the classroom as she questions the power of the university to promote change. Talburt (2000) asks “how to disrupt the normalization—through knowledge, social relations, pedagogical practices, and cultural mediation—of both hetero- and homosexuality. Projects that teach tolerance (to straights) and offer role models (to queers) create necessarily distorted knowledges through partial, normalized images and depend on intact identities that can be rationally seen and received” (p. 8). This is only one of the many risks associated with disclosing one’s sexuality in the classroom and provides support for some of Britzman’s (1993) concerns.

There are a number of risks associated with disclosure, including the accusation of the misuse of power. For example, the lesbian who discusses heterosexism and homophobia will likely experience a tension between having insight because of her
experiences and being accused of bias. In her discussion of educators coming out, Khayatt (1997) raises the issue that once a teacher comes out, everything that teacher says is filtered. While this is probably true, this is the case no matter what identities are assumed, declared, or apparent; therefore there may be some power in acknowledging and using identity more proactively.

In my view, the concept of role modeling or identification is one that needs to be embraced and integrated more fully into discussions of educating for citizenship and reflective accountability, and I want to spend some time discussing more positive accounts of these approaches. Courtenay-Hall (1993) provides a good contrast to Britzman's (1993) work by discussing the issue of role models within a university setting with a particular eye to more explicit policy discussions of the promotion of role modeling. Courtney-Hall's work recognizes the potentially negative aspects of the role model argument that are emphasized by Britzman; however, she extends her analysis to look at the benefits of a more complex conceptualization of role modeling. After setting the stage with respect to the low representation of female faculty in philosophy departments, Courtenay-Hall (1993) argues that hiring practices that are based on an equity model reflect "responsive hiring" because it is designed to address problems of overt and covert discrimination that have characterized academic hiring. She argues that "in the context of university hiring, 'role model' should be taken to mean, not a person whom a student can emulate, but rather, a person experienced with and sympathetic to many of the kinds of challenges that a student will be faced with in her academic efforts, and a person whose on-the-job performance gives living testimony to the promise that women can and do have fulfilling careers in philosophy" (p. 71). Bell, Morrow, and
Tastsoglou (1999) argue that “instructors’ discussion of their role and position both as women and as teachers within a hierarchical and patriarchal institutional structure, where their interests lie both within such structure and against it, can illustrate to students how relations of domination are reproduced and encourage them to examine their own positions within these structures” (p. 41).

In their discussion of “the pedagogy of marking,” Yescavage and Alexander (1997) point out that “weighing into our decision to be openly gay in the classroom was our interest in introducing cognitive dissonance in our students. This dissonance is based on an incongruence between two attitudes, namely that: (1) the majority of our students hold a positive attitude toward us as teachers, and (2) the majority of Americans hold negative attitudes towards homosexuals, as Newsweek’s national poll reminds us” (p. 113). Clearly this decision to be openly gay is based on some pedagogical assumptions about the power of teachers as role models or representatives of diversity, and I believe it can disrupt the taken-for-grantedness that interferes with students’ learning and ultimately their ability to be responsible citizens.

It is interesting that the dissenting opinion of the Supreme Court of Canada in Chamberlain v. Surrey School District No. 36. (see Footnote 11) refers to the negative aspects of cognitive dissonance. The opinion asks

Do five-and six-year-olds have the capacity and ability to differentiate between accepting such portrayals [of same-sex parents] as “another mode of being” that is not to be discriminated against, without also considering that it is “just as good a mode of being”? The second factual question relates to the significant emphasis in the expert and parental testimony regarding the concern that to provide for the portrayal of one view of parents in same-sex relationships at school and yet another at home may give rise to a conflict of authority, which will cause “cognitive dissonance” on the children’s part. (¶ 178)

I argue that cognitive dissonance is not something that education should avoid; instead,
on issues such as discrimination, the schools should be leaders in challenging points of view that perpetuate this bigotry and ignorance.

One of the consequences of Yescavage and Alexander’s (1997) pedagogy of marking or Courtenay-Hall’s conception of role modeling is the feeling expressed by some students that when sexuality comes up in my classroom, I must have brought it up and therefore it must be part of my agenda. I think part of this feeling is based on my heightened sensitivity to the classroom atmosphere when we are exploring these issues; however, there is certainly more to it than that. I concur with Yescavage and Alexander’s (1997) assertion that this focus on the introduction of these topics is misplaced as sexuality is in the air and therefore implicitly or explicitly embedded in all of our discussions of social issues. The problem arises most often because we have not critically examined the privileged and unspoken position of heterosexuality that brings attention to the “Other” when it is brought up. Inherent in this discussion of teacher as text is the expectation that there are some lines that should not or need not be crossed. I was interested in Yescavage and Alexander’s (1997) account of Alexander’s story about some students’ concern that his coming out was too personal as they had seemingly equated, as so many do, sexuality and sexual behaviour. Alexander’s initial response was that the students’ discomfort was surprising as he did not make this same leap and given no teacher including himself talks about their sex life. I argue that Alexander’s response was as uncritical as the students’ because he did not interrogate this overly simplistic understanding with his students by acknowledging that heterosexuals bring their sexuality into their classrooms all the time by wearing their wedding rings and discussing their family vacations and children.
This discussion reminded me of a rather interesting collegial evaluation that I received in my final year as the Chair of the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice. While the average score in response to overall performance was 3.9 out of 4.0, I had two separate remarks made in the written comments that I believe illustrate some of the consequences to individuals who have been criticized because of an erroneous and ill-defined construction of the public/private divide in our teaching. One of my colleagues noted that I am “a great colleague . . . better than most of us. Perhaps she could strike a better balance by not over-emphasizing the personal aspects of her life so much?” Another commented that I should “relax and just be the professional [I am], while more gently and less frequently focusing on her personal views (in and out of class).” It did not take me long to understand that the fact that I talk about my family and have pictures of my children in my office, like so many of my colleagues, forces some of my peers on a daily basis to confront their prejudice towards me as a lesbian, in particular, a lesbian who is not in the closet. Reflecting on these tensions, I concur with Alexander’s observation that too many students, and I suggest colleagues, have “not reached a point where [they] understand ‘gay’ identity as a public subject position, the performance of a particular role which is less a ‘revelation’ of the details of one’s sex life than a necessary public statement of liberation from oppression. . . . [and that] this insistence on understanding sexual orientation as a strictly personal aspect of any life eclipses the possibility of thinking critically about the ways in which all sexual orientations—whether they be gay, straight, bi or ‘?’—are largely public property” (Yescavage & Alexander, 1997, p. 114).

Rensenbrink (1996) details a story about Rosemary, a fifth grade lesbian teacher,
who argues that the safety of being out is contingent upon choice, whereby sometimes she is a teacher and sometimes she is a lesbian teacher. While I acknowledge the point that she is making, I am interested in this dynamic of partitioning our locations. I wonder if it would ever be possible or desirable for me to just be an educator and not a lesbian educator. What would that look like when my teaching and learning is such a mental, physical and spiritual enterprise?

Britzman’s (1995) discussion of “Patton’s reading of governmental AIDS information discourses shows how the normal subject-presumed-to-know and the deviant subject-obligated-to-confess became discursively produced” (p. 162). All of these issues revolve around the confessional pressures that are exerted by heterosexist institutions and many lesbians and gay men who see visibility as the key to ending our oppression. These specific discussions of sexuality can be extended to talk about family more generally.

In a different but parallel discussion of the permeability of these boundaries between the private and public, Karen noted that she has “tended to cross the student/teacher line and found some of the best experiences I’ve had with teaching.” Wendy also described her foray into this often uncharted and sometimes perilous territory:

I think when I came to this university, I was shocked by the culture. It was very different from anything that I had worked in before and I silenced myself because I was getting odd looks when I would bring things up about my life, my family. So I was silent for awhile and then I got angry and kind of resentful and I bitched about it, but I didn’t do a whole lot. And then finally, I’m in the phase now where I still say it and I try to say it in a positive way because I don’t want to use some of the hurtful strategies that I’ve seen other colleagues use. I just refuse to do that, but I realize that some of the time I’m having no impact and they’re not listening and I’m not going to change them. And that was really hard to learn and I share these stories with my students. I talk about how wonderful it is to have a family. I don’t compartmentalize my work and family, which I don’t think anyone else [in this department] does.
Educators need to think carefully about the difference between the concept of private as part of the public/private divide and the use of private to delineate issues or comments that do not belong in the classroom. It is difficult if not impossible to establish rules regarding these disclosures, particularly at the post-secondary level; however, decisions should be guided by how the personal contributes to the pedagogical and curricular goals of the course and how it is framed for the students.

Apple (cited in Carlson, 1998) raises a caution regarding the hazard of invoking the teacher as a storyteller because it has the potential to manifest itself as an "academic form of narcissism" (p. 553). In her discussion of the student-teacher relationship, Tom (1997) argues that "learning to be deliberate in relationship requires learning to pause, to ask, and then to act responsibly" (p. 12). As a possible response to Apple's concern Tom (1997) contends that "teaching from a place of personal presence is essential to the project of demystifying power. Presence in the teaching relationship means being a genuine person in our interactions with students" (p. 18). However, she argues that part of the teacher's responsibility is to ensure that students are not overwhelmed or responsible for the personal stories we share.

Another major hazard of disclosure that results in further entrenching the us against them mindset is highlighted by the observation that mainstream society has "allott[ed] the dissidents their own special territories where, like 'savages' on reservations, they can live safe from assault, and where visiting tourists can also be reassured that their own desires hold nothing in common with the desires of the dissidents" (Browning, 1993). According to Tom (1997) "presence is thus in itself a feminist practice that enacts the belief that lives are not disconnected, discrete units, but
integrated wholes. In acting as whole people we encourage our students to regard themselves—and those they will study with or serve—as complex wholes” (p. 18).

As I stated earlier, there are some issues that are personal and do not belong in the classroom, however “we want to explore the many ways in which personal identity is a public and social construction, a confluence and amalgam of cultural and political forces which categorize, label, and divide us into manageable and controllable subsets” (Yescavage & Alexander, 1997, p. 115). Acknowledging this social construction of identity may open doors to engage with our students in ways that promote a climate that is conducive to reflective solidarity.

Lewis (1993) provides an excellent analysis of strategies to interrogate identity that can be used in the classroom to develop a liberating education within a constraining society. Lewis explores the tensions between women’s risk-taking in learning and their protectiveness with respect to the men in their lives as they attempt to integrate their learning into all corners of their lives. I found this contextualization of women’s experiences to be refreshing, as too often educators talk about women’s exploration of feminism as if it occurred within a closed community of other like-minded individuals. Dean’s (1996) discussion of the transition through the three phases of identity politics highlights the importance of frames of reference as individuals engage in various spheres of public engagement and illustrates that the context of learning is fundamental to an individual’s ability to be an active citizen in their community.

Any discussion of the role of the personal revolves around a discussion of identity. Bell, Morrow and Tastsoglou (1999) argue that “feminist and antiracist pedagogies place a high value on subjective experience as a route to understanding our
lives and the lives of others and emphasize the legitimacy of knowledge that arises from
socially marginalized positions" (p. 23). As I have discussed, there were two particular
aspects of the personal that I found compelling as I conducted my interviews. First is the
role of personal disclosure by students, teachers and in curriculum materials in shaping
the opportunities for citizenship education. Second, is the role of identity and various
efforts to challenge simplistic and inadequate examinations of identity and role modeling
as they contribute to classroom dynamics. Dawn highlights some of the tensions
embedded in experiential learning as she talks about her experiences with TAG:

I’ll tell you what turned me off. I was reading one of their newsletters and they
were trying to say “here’s an example of how you get a discussion going in your
class, ask the students “how do you feel about that?” And that’s so contrary to my
own pedagogy. I thought ah man, if that’s what they’re into gimme a break. The
last thing I want to do in a class that’s about women’s issues is to get people to
reinforce some kind of belief that they have about how the world works because it
feels right to them. And that’s the real postmodern thing about valorizing feeling
and I’m just really adamantly opposed to that. I mean it’s a white middle class
thing about validating your feelings because white middle-class people have had
the privilege to always feel good and they don’t like feeling uncomfortable,
they’ve never had to feel uncomfortable. The world resonates with their own
experience. Ask my friend who is a black female academic, she laughs “I’ve
never felt comfortable in the classroom”. . . . In fact, the adult educator I worked
with tells her classes “if you feel comfortable, you’re probably not learning
anything.”

Dawn’s comments regarding the privilege that is often associated with comfort
raised some important questions for me in terms of solidarity through conflict. How does
reflective solidarity accommodate the reality that certain individuals and groups are more
favourably positioned to experience this conflict? More specifically, how can classroom
practice acknowledge and address these differences in privilege in the classroom? Is
there a need to make more space for less privileged viewpoints? If so, how does that
change the strict attention to process advocated by Dean? I return to these questions in
my discussions of pluralism, silence, and risk-taking.

Marlee discussed the inherently personal nature of law that is too often ignored in favour of a more procedural approach to legal education:

That’s how law is taught from the beginning. Cases always involve individuals in various contexts and so there’s lots of really personal issues that are right at the fore when you’re talking about legal cases. And so right from the beginning you’re talking about really personal stuff about people. . . . People do it in different ways, but the hook is there so you can go with it pedagogically if you want to.

Our personal stories reflect the locations from which we speak and there were a number of conversations about how identity is acknowledged and explored in the classroom. Marlee and Gerry provided some specific examples of how identities and the public/private duality that informs identities plays out in the curriculum as they look at shifting the ground of their students:

So one of my key goals is to start right from the very beginning emphasizing and really talking about the way that gender and race and class and other social relations intersect to create poverty. . . . So I hope in the process of the Social Welfare Law course to politicize students. [Marlee]

I get them to read stuff on sexism and research methods. So they read that and often they’re kind of pissed off with that because I’m using a lot of examples around gender and sexism. I then get them to think about how they would work with those ideas around anti-racism. So that’s a way of making them engage with this material around gender but shifting the ground a bit so that they’re face-to-face with gender, but they’re also using it to think about some other issue. By that time they have labeled me as totally PC, but there is something about the movement [from gender to race] that gives them a bit of a release from one context and allows them to work with the ideas more actively. [Gerry]

Educators’ abilities to work with the uncertainty and potential volatility associated with this type of pedagogical approach will vary and in some cases be impeded by lack of experience and/or knowledge about pedagogical strategies and curriculum design. As Dawn pointed out earlier, professors are not often trained or schooled in the art of
teaching, therefore our classroom practice is fueled by our disciplinary knowledge and our passion for the subject matter. It is little wonder that the personal pervades all of our work, but it continues to amaze me that only certain educators are challenged for their subjectivity and that more educators do not recognize and embrace the centrality of personal experience.

In contrast to Ellsworth’s (1989) skepticism with respect to the emancipatory potential of feminist pedagogies, hooks (1988) pays tribute to the “pedagogical guardians” (p. 50) in her life who have assisted her in developing her approach to teaching. She outlines the role of feminist pedagogy in providing a venue for the production and articulation of alternative discourses about sex and race. hooks (1988) challenges educators to confront dominant forms of pedagogy and to rethink their pedagogical and curricular approaches to facilitate their students’ engagement with the emancipatory aspects of education. This challenge is central to the goals of my research.

This chapter has focused on the power of the educator to provide a climate that is conducive to the types of critical exchanges that are embedded in reflective solidarity and the goal of reflective accountability. In particular, I argue that educators must be supported as we reflect on and experiment with how power, authority, partiality, and identity shape our pedagogical approaches. Educators, administrators and students need to explore the expectations, opportunities, barriers, strategies and successes that characterize teaching and learning in the university. This spirit of rejuvenation and collaboration is central to educating for social justice. In the next chapter, I explore how the dynamics of pluralism, voice and silence build on this discussion by focusing on the role of professorial power and authority in navigating classroom exchanges.
Chapter VI

Solidarity Across Our Differences: Negotiating Pluralism, Voice and Silence

Dean (1997a) writes that “feminist theory needs a concept of reflective solidarity if its stress on local politics and coalitional practices is to avoid replicating the competitive, instrumental mind-set of interest group pluralism on the one hand, and a utopian, unquestioning multiculturalism on the other” (p. 4). While Dean is very clear about the necessity of avoiding either end of this continuum, the characteristics and the strategies to achieve that middle ground are less clear. Given that Dean’s work does not explicitly address education, a critical focus of this dissertation is to try to articulate some of the pedagogical strategies that might be employed in creating some of these discursive spaces.

As I outlined in Chapter 1, I am particularly interested in how reflective solidarity accommodates the discourse that characterizes highly charged issues. To move this discussion forward, I want to explore some of the pedagogical responses to these situations that are presented in the literature and in the insights provided by the participants. Dean addresses plurality most specifically in her discussion of discursive universalism and the situated, hypothetical third. Dean (1996) argues that “once we understand discourse ethics as the fallible, situated, and open-ended conversation of humanity, we gain a concept of universality that enables us to move beyond the opposition between universal and particular to account for the diversity that is always part of universality” (p. 143). For Dean (1996), “the hypothetical third signifies the space occupied by the excluded other, the perspective that would be included if the voices of the marginalized could be heard” [emphasis in the original] (p. 172).
My goals in this chapter are: (a) to explore discussions of pluralism and relativism in education and how the debates about the equality/difference dichotomy surface in this discussion, and (b) to examine voice and silence as two discursive options, the latter of which is not adequately addressed in Dean's theory of reflective solidarity. As I have done throughout this dissertation, I will use discussions of sexuality as an example to explore these issues.

The Perils and Possibilities of Pluralism: Relativism, Difference and Pedagogical Choices

My goal in this section is to examine how pluralism has the potential to cause problems when all views are given equal weight and legitimacy, yet how pluralism offers the possibility of complicating the equality/difference discussion so that it contributes to reflective solidarity. A number of participants pointed to a pluralist approach in their classrooms as something that they valued philosophically and strategically; however, they did recognize the potential for relativism to creep into a pluralist classroom:

By the time I got to UBC I said, “Well, I want to make sure that everybody feels recognized wherever they’re at” because we feel our ideologies to the core—that’s how we see the world. So if there’s no recognition of even the idea that there are competing views out there, then to me that’s anti-educational and very alienating. . . . I do bend over backwards to create space for people who are espousing a less popular view in the class. I probably overdo it sometimes, but I want them to feel like they don’t have to sit there in silence. I’d rather have them putting their views out there and have enough respect for each other that those ideas can be challenged, because otherwise why are we there? We’re not really learning anything, we’re just endorsing our previously held views. [Deirdre]

Most of the students will want to hear less of the discrimination and feminist issues although they are never overt [about that] in the classroom. I suppose that’s because they don’t want to piss me off too much. I do think I am fairly pluralist in the classroom even though I obviously have my own views on various issues and I’m sure they actually read in a lot of my own views whether they are there or not. I try to create a reasonable amount of space for people to voice their
opinions and if anyone says something too outrageous, I probably will respond. [Susan]

Hotelling and Schulteis (1997) raise the hazard of relativity that is sometimes a consequence of pluralism, whereby multiple subjectivities are the foundation for claims to sameness because we share the quality of being different. Bell, Morrow and Tastsoglou (1999) highlight the “dilemma of this ‘liberal’ classroom, torn between the students’ demands to express experiences and feelings freely and our apprehensions that the uncritical expression of experience would be detrimental to a broader understanding of oppression” (p. 27). Deirdre echoes this concern noting that

There’s a more post-modern inspired way of talking about difference that I find is very appealing to students at one level, but lets them off the hook at another level . . . . what bothers me about it is that sometimes it seems like that way of talking about difference doesn’t force the students to grapple with how they’re privileged. They kind of seize on how they’re not always the oppressor. So I feel like when I emphasize the more post-modern fluidity of identities, it’s got some good aspects to it, but I worry that some of the anti-oppression stuff is getting lost. . . . I think Nancy Fraser’s book *Justice Interruptus* is a good corrective to Iris Young’s theory because you kind of get the idea from reading about Young’s model of oppression that “all difference is good” and Fraser says “no, not all difference is good.” Do we want to preserve Nazi skinhead space? No we don’t. So I find that to be still something that I’m working through myself.

Cornwell (1998) contributes to this discussion of multiple perspectives in her discussion of hate speech in the university setting as she argues that there are specific risks associated with providing all views with equal legitimacy:

The marketplace of ideas metaphor invokes an image of a classroom where multiple positions and contributions are presented and considered. The assumption is that, through careful consideration, some ideas rise in merit and by contrast all the “lesser” ideas lose sway. The marketplace of ideas is a romantic and even seductive way to think about free speech, particularly in the classroom, where free speech takes on almost “sacred” qualities. Subsequently, the marketplace of ideas metaphor seems to nest nicely with the feminist goal of a democratic learning environment. . . . In the case of hatred speech, in particular, the marketplace approach to free expression in the classroom is, at times, a perpetuation of the inequities and injustices that feminist pedagogy attempts to
overcome. (p. 107)

Cornwell’s comments regarding the specific case of hate speech are important in the broader discussion of harmful and bigoted speech in the classroom. How do educators respond to expressions of bigotry in the classroom? How should we respond?

Bell, Morrow and Tastsoglou (1999) argue that “the absence of an historically situated perspective can reinforce notions of cultural pluralism or digress into what Giroux refers to as ‘the pedagogy of normative pluralism’ creating a classroom where differences are politely managed and a critical analysis of culture and experience is made impossible” (p. 38).

Cornwell (1998) proposes that

One can imagine the difference in how hate speech is approached if, instead of the liberal remedy of countering hate speech with more speech, the emphasis is placed on creating a discursive space where mutual communication—as a shared creation of meaning—is the priority. Speech that fundamentally disrupts the balance in the communication process—hate speech being a good example—should not hold the same social value as communication that seeks to bring about better understanding. . . . hate speech in the classroom may effectively be an expressive act that harms, intimidates, and silences students. (p. 114)

Nussbaum (1997) extends this discussion by noting that

Some scholars view debate about the morality of homosexual conduct in that light, as a challenge to the dignity of persons based on ignorance and prejudice. They believe that attacks on homosexuals as immoral and deprived have no more place in the classroom than attacks on Catholics or Irish people or Jews as immoral and depraved. That is to say, they hold that one might legitimately study such materials as e.g. in the sociology of prejudice, but not as if they had equal weight with the contradictory opinions. (p. 252)

Cornwell and Nussbaum’s discussion of speech that is harmful and inappropriate for the classroom highlights the ambivalence experienced by educators as they navigate moments that are fraught with tension:

I don’t have a problem with saying “I don’t agree with that point of view.” So it’s
not that I don’t take a stand myself, but I don’t insist that somebody give up their point of view. But I do push them to provide better reasons. . . . but I do it a little bit tentatively because I certainly don’t want students ever to think that they’re being graded on the degree to which they agree with me. . . . [In terms of homophobic or heterosexist comments in the classroom] it’s an issue where I do feel strongly and it’s the one issue where, frankly you do see some [offensive] attitudes that do have widespread legitimacy in our society being expressed by students in class discussions. [Deirdre]

Nussbaum (1997) explores this tactic of defending one’s position as she argues that “Socratic inquiry mandates pluralism. . . . [and] it implies that we should cling to that which we can rationally defend, and be willing to discover that this may or may not be identical with the view we held when we began the inquiry” (p. 32). This position certainly raises the positive potential of pluralism and highlights the possibilities associated with utilizing Dean’s model of reflective solidarity. However, it does not provide any meaningful direction regarding the potential hazards of pluralism for those whose marginalization is intensified by an assumption of legitimacy associated with classroom comments. Obviously, pluralism encompasses differences in points of view as well as differences in sex, race, class and sexuality that are embedded in those perspectives. It is critical that approaches to pluralism in the classroom are not complacent and ultimately complicit in more liberal and relativist constructions of discourse. Oppressive discourses should be identified and explored as such and should not be given equal standing with other positions. As I discuss in Chapter 8, these types of determinations are not always clear and are inherently problematic because of the value we place on speech. Despite these concerns, educators need to think more critically about the consequences of not engaging in these assessments.

Intricately connected to any discussion of relativism is the concept of multiple oppressions, that is, how do we understand the experiences of a black, working-class
lesbian? Both Spelman (1988) and West and Fenstermaker (1995) challenge the mathematical metaphors that tend to be invoked in discussions of multiple oppressions and highlight the dangers of this type of simplified analyses. Particularly interesting are the discussions about the ranking of oppressions that inevitably occurs when additive conceptualizations of oppression are utilized.

Specialized programs such as women’s studies and gay and lesbian studies that utilize this add-on strategy are only one type of forum that promotes counter-discourses that emphasize difference. There is a parallel need to encourage critical reflection in all areas of the curriculum to promote public spheres that will facilitate the types of discourses necessary to develop an active democratic citizenry and indeed the types of conversations that are indicated by Dean. As I discussed earlier in reference to Currie’s (1992) discussion regarding subjectivity, Harding (1991) emphasizes the need for a more rigorous or “strong objectivity” throughout the curriculum that acknowledges the locations from which we make knowledge claims and that would replace more traditional conceptions of objectivity by highlighting difference. Harding’s arguments parallel Bannerji’s (1991) assertions regarding who may speak for whom by making the point that developing an epistemological standpoint of women or any other group does not simply illuminate these groups, it sheds important light on all members of society. In her discussion of sexuality, Harding (1991) argues that “starting thought from the (many different) daily activities of lesbians enables us to see things that might otherwise have been invisible to us, not just about those lives but about heterosexual women’s lives and men’s lives, straight as well as gay” (p. 252). It is within this context of reflection on difference and commonality that Dean’s (1996) model of citizenship resides. I argue that
pedagogical decisions based on this type of conceptual framework of citizenship have tremendous potential for integrating and achieving the goals of educating for citizenship but need to be understood within a context.

Dean (1996) argues that “we cannot ignore the promise of identity politics, its ideals of security, belonging, and self-respect” (p. 177). Further, Dean (1996) contends that

Reflective solidarity seeks to redeem this promise by reconstructing it in the categories of discursive universalism. Rather than basing the strength of our association on our common experiences of pain and oppression, or tradition and affection, it anchors it in our ability to recognize each other as mysterious, inviolate, and worthy of respect, a recognition that allows us to assert and contest the claims each raises as we attempt to come to understanding. (p. 177)

Jo-ann illustrates Dean’s position in her comments on the dichotomy of equality and difference and the need to build on commonality:

We always go back to the basic teachings that our Elders give to us and they say, “If we think of everyone in a circle, then we are all equal. We all can have a say but at the same time we can all be different and it’s respected.” To me it’s like why should they be in conflict with each other? So we may have particular issues about something that may be very distinct to First Nations so we need to engage in that and at the same time we want to form alliances with others on certain issues. There are times when we may have issues dealing with systemic racism and it could be different cultural groups that are affected. So how do we form our alliances when at the same time we’re saying, “Yeah, but the racism that we experience is different. Not more or less but different.” I think we have difficulty in First Nations when we try to compare ourselves to others, and this happens where we compare First Nations to Western culture and sometimes it can be a helpful comparison and then other times it’s just too simplistic and doesn’t work. I think we have to get back to being able to conceptualize the issue in our own way and then to communicate it to somebody else so that they understand it. And that’s maybe where some of the difficulty comes up, but if we don’t conceptualize it in our way, then that’s where we have difficulty. If we try and use somebody else’s paradigm to conceptualize it, it’s not going to work.

Dawn echoed some of Jo-ann’s observations in her discussion of a second-year course she teaches called “Women in Comparative Perspective”: 
I tell them at the beginning of the year there’s the tension between similarity and difference. They’re doing their projects on the Beijing Platform for Action, so that’s an example of the necessity, politically to identify some kind of similarity in order to have political clout, but within that it’s women from around the world. It’s an example about the importance of difference... an issue that women around the world said, “this is important to us” despite the fact that culturally, violence against women might express itself differently and it means different things and the struggles are different but unified together we can identify that as a point at which there is agreement among feminists.

In a more specific discussion of the tenuous relationship between equality and difference, Susan described one of her experiences:

Some students have already thought through really clearly what they think their identity is and how that should matter both in the classroom and in terms of how the teacher facilitates discussions. I had this one really powerful black woman in my class who was a feminist, who at that point in her life was really, really stressing race issues, and for good reason because the law school has few black people in it.... For her she needed race to be on the table every time we talked about an issue, and I’m not sure if she was always very good about seeing the other issues of power and inequality. I found it really difficult to try to balance what was clearly a need on her part, an appropriate need, to have that issue discussed well in the classroom.... She eventually stopped coming to class and that was very difficult.

In response to the type of challenge that Susan describes, there is often a reliance on some sense of coming together by working toward common language and definitions on these points of conflict. Despite the commonsense lure of this approach and the temptation to rely on understanding as an achievable and desirable objective of both the process and the goal of a discourse, there are very important questions that need to be raised. Shauna emphasized how important it is that educators and community members become more creative in their responses to contestation and feel more comfortable working in spaces that are fuelled with tension and divisions:

I think that’s one of the failures of the woman’s movement is that ability to create a space where solidarity is actually more broadly defined. It’s not simply everyone agreeing at the end of the day. It’s about working with difference in relations of alliance or solidarity. ... One of the challenges we face when working
across difference within the woman's movement is to work with conflicts that
emerge, not just racial, but differences of opinion and understanding and
experience and personality. We need to learn to work with conflict affiliatively
and pleasurably as sources of energy. And I think the white middle class culture
that I come from and that's been dominant in the woman's movement, reflects a
particular cultural bias that makes it hard for us to work within that kind of
volatile and conflicted environment. People find conflict extremely painful and
difficult; a lot of people just simply retreat... I think taking on some of those
ideas in the classroom, which is a bracketed space, is difficult.

*Voice and Silence: Pedagogical Opportunities and Responsibilities*

So what pedagogical choices can we make to overcome some of these challenges
in our conceptualizations of difference in ways that move a conversation forward?

Needless to say in a course like [family law] there are lots of opportunities to
discuss how gender and race and class and sexuality and disability intersect with
one another and complicate the analysis... A lot of people who come to law
school are extremely idealistic and they think law is justice and I guess I am a bit
of a cynic in that regard... It's got the same biases and power dynamics that any
other social institution does... In terms of introducing them to feminist
approaches and social context, at a really practical level if they are going to go out
and do something with law, when they see a client in front of them they won't
make inappropriate assumptions about what the clients' experience has been or
what their needs might be. [Susan]

One of the things we've done in Social Geography—it's a course on identity—we
talk about the hybridity of identities and movement between subject positions.
That is helpful for insisting on differences while thinking about points of
connection and a kind of displacement that we all feel. I rely on post-structural
identity theory to do that. [Gerry]

Other than Deirdre, none of the participants were familiar with Dean's (1996)
work; however, after providing participants with a brief description of Dean's concept of
reflective solidarity I asked them how it might be connected to their practice. Maria
framed her comments in an administrative context and highlighted that "we're agreeing to
listen to each other. Not to agree, not to act together but to have respect for each other's
right to be at the table."
Both Dawn and Marlee talked about the challenges of moving students to a place where they are even willing or able to engage in the type of discussion embodied in reflective solidarity. These participants discussed the type of critical, engaged and informed dialogue described by Dean as an educational goal as opposed to a process that leads to the goal of solidarity:

The only way that real progress has been made is by having this kind of solidarity which implies a certain kind of similarity but it’s a similarity of goals. . . . It’s a matter of me, in a hopefully not too simplistic way, initiating the students to think about that dilemma. I’ve organized the material in a way that gives a suggestion of when it’s important to think about similarity but what the trap is and when it’s important to think about difference but what the trap can be there too, and if I get them even sensitive to that as a dilemma, then that’s a big breakthrough. [Dawn]

The reflective aspect is not just us reflecting as individuals, it’s engaging in the debates. . . . Often in the classroom I can’t get people to engage enough. I can’t formulate the questions or spark their interest in a way that will really get them to deal with the hard issues or address their differences—vertical differences. That’s what I really want to do in the classroom, to get them to fight even though it’s hard, but I always find that you learn more that way. It might be difficult and it might be harder, obviously harder on some people. I don’t want anyone to get hurt through it, but at the same time I think people learn more. [Marlee]

Marlee’s discussion of solidarity supported Dean’s call for movement beyond identity politics emphasizing process and dialogue by pointing to the need for a common substantive goal. Dean’s (1996) concept of “reflective solidarity urges that we replace ascribed identities with achieved ones and substitute an enforced commonality of oppression with communities of those who have chosen to work and fight together” (p. 179).

The coalition building amongst people with differences has to happen for real political reasons. That you can’t assume that people have alliances just because of a particular identity, but you have to actually work to draw people together towards a political goal. So it’s focusing on those political aspirations and political goals that people have rather than how they define themselves—I think it can be done. In other words, it’s real, it’s not imposed, it’s not an imposed collective, it’s a political collective. It’s one where people acknowledge they have
a particular goal in common. [Marlee]

Moving forward from a place where differences drive wedges between individuals and groups and stifle productive dialogue necessitates a reconceptualization of the consequences of these differences on a participatory model of democracy. Most of the participants talked about this new site of discourse using concepts of solidarity and voice and the need to always explore opportunities for action.

Dean (1996) notes that “in urging the contextuality, fallibility, and openness of discourse, I have offered an interpretation of discourse based on the diversity of the voices of those who enter and change it. This discourse, far from tending toward unity, allows for a nonviolent plurality—open spaces for differences in which we can strive for recognition and understanding” (p. 180). I will address Dean’s reliance on understanding in the final chapter as I explore education’s rather uncritical stance toward the goal of understanding. However, at this point I want to talk about voice and its relationship to silence.

It is important that we problematize the notion of voice and challenge the simplistic and often essentialist conceptualization of voice. The importance and the politics of voice must be acknowledged and integrated into the curriculum, particularly as the idea of finding voice is often invoked in efforts to critique traditional claims of objectivity within academe and to promote a culture of activism. There is no independent or objective voice from which we speak; instead our voice is always framed by context (Carlson, 1998). Participants emphasized the interconnectedness of speech and silence by examining issues such as: essentialism, the inattention to listening as a critical activity, the physicality of the communication in the classroom, and multiple meanings of silence.
Many of these issues are wonderfully summarized by hooks (1994), as she notes:

A distinction must be made between a shallow emphasis on coming to voice, which wrongly suggests there can be some democratization of voice wherein everyone’s words will be given equal time and be seen as equally valuable (often the model applied in feminist classrooms), and the more complex recognition of the uniqueness of each voice... because all students are free to speak, knowing their presence will be recognized and valued. This does not mean that anything can be said, no matter how irrelevant to classroom subject matter, and receive attention—or that something meaningful takes place if everyone has equal time to voice an opinion. In the classes I teach, I have students write short paragraphs that they read aloud so that we all have chance to hear unique perspectives and we are all given an opportunity to pause and listen to one another. Just the physical experience of hearing, of listening intently, to each particular voice strengthens our capacity to learn together. Even though a student may not speak again after this moment, that student’s presence has been acknowledged. (p. 186)

hooks’ (1994) commentary emphasizes students’ voices, while Bannerji shifts the lens a bit by focusing on her experiences as an educator. Bannerji (1991) approaches the issue of voice by exploring three key themes. First, Bannerji discusses her feelings of “otherness” in the classroom and reveals her constant struggle to assert herself as a teacher as her legitimacy is constantly challenged by students and colleagues. Second, she notes the apprehension experienced within some traditional research circles as we use everyday social interaction to formulate or affirm sociological explanations of behaviours—an observation that I raised as I talked about the teacher as text. Finally, she explores the contentious issue of “who may speak for whom” and argues that we need an “integrative and reflexive analysis to work out a political position which allows anyone to speak for/from the experience of individuals and groups while leaving room to speak ‘socially’ from other locations” (Bannerji, 1991, p. 95). This final point is directly related to Dean’s discussion of the situated, hypothetical third and the potential for reflective solidarity. However, instead of offering it as a necessary opportunity, Dean (1996) talks about it as an obligation:
Many people who 'write' identity politics begin with definitions, introducing themselves with a string of identifications: "I am" a race, sex, class, sexual orientation, age, and ability. These identifications somehow "authorize" the author, establishing the legitimacy of the words, experiences, and theories that follow. Yet even as they are raised triumphantly, defying both the presumption of universality and neutrality of the authorial voice and its implicit whiteness, maleness, and heterosexuality, these identifications often take on the character of an excuse: "I" cannot (will not?) be accountable for that or those beyond my experience or outside my identity. (p. 175)

Another aspect of the recognition of voice points to our power as teachers to give voice to particular perspectives and authors as we develop our course syllabus and select course readings:

I really make a lot of room for the conservative viewpoint in the classroom discussions and inevitably there's one or two students who are quite conservative and not afraid to articulate that, and I really encourage them to speak out in class. However, I don't include a lot of readings from the conservative point of view. I started out having one central piece that was conservative, but I find that the conservative ideology is "in the air", so if I ever get a complaint from students about "why don't we have more conservative readings?" it takes me about five minutes to get them to elicit the conservative viewpoint without any reading. [Deirdre]

Deirdre's comments demonstrate students' willingness, and I would argue increasing willingness, to challenge some of their professors regarding their curriculum design. I am going to discuss this in greater depth as it relates to resistance (Chapter 7); however, Kalia (1991) provides a poignant discussion of race that focuses on students' voices as she explores some of the layers of conflict that students experience as they grapple with the inclusion of analyses of race, gender and class. The author explores the all too common expectations of faculty that students who find gaps in the curriculum should be responsible for suggesting literature to fill those voids. It is rather compelling that this request with respect to marginalized content is often the only time that students are asked to contribute to the construction of the curriculum.
Deirdre’s point about the taken-for-grantedness of more conservative positions and Kalia’s (1991) discussion of student demands for more inclusive curriculum both revolve around decisions made about what we talk about, and perhaps more importantly, what we do not talk about in our classrooms. Mohanty (1994) makes an interesting contribution to this dilemma in her discussion of the politics associated with ranking oppressions and defining the necessary hierarchy of interests inherent in alternative approaches. Mohanty examines the dynamics that are employed to determine which differences should be given the privilege of discussion. Giroux’s (1988) description of a “pedagogy of normative pluralism” (p. 95) aptly characterizes the response of many of my students who demand increasing attention to a plurality of interests as a way of masking their resistance to the increased attention to voices that have been previously unheard. For example, some white male students are articulating their claims for greater attention based on the marginalization of their experiences within a more critical curriculum.

The discussion of homosexuality, as a thread that runs through this study, sheds light on the complexity of pluralism and the celebration of voice. How does one address views that are discriminatory in nature? Cornwell’s (1998) examination of hate speech and racist speech is instructive as I explore the discussion of homosexuality in the classroom. On one side “traditional liberal speech theorists tend toward an absolutist view of free speech; they argue that to begin to limit speech based on content marks the embarkation down the ‘slippery slope’ toward censorship” (Cornwell, 1998, p. 108). However, Cornwell goes on to argue that “a thread that runs through the racist speech literature argues that it is impossible to fully understand the harmful nature of such
speech—the psychological damage, its ability to silence the victim, the re-affirmation of the victim’s second class status—if one is not a minority” (p. 108). Despite this recognition of risk for those who are likely to be harmed, there is an equally compelling argument regarding the risks of silencing discriminatory speech, preventing educators from engaging with the speakers and perhaps contributing to a shift in their position. These competing principles of speech and harm are integral to my introduction of reflective accountability in Chapter 8.

Clearly Dean’s (1997) reflective solidarity is grounded in a more positive and participatory set of communicative activities, yet I don’t believe Dean adequately addresses the role that silence, as a strategy to wield power and as a consequence of marginalization, plays in the classroom and in the highly charged discussions that surround some issues.

Silence as Power/”Silencing” as an Oppressive Reality

Lewis (1993) argues that we need to pay a great deal more attention to understanding women’s silence and that it is important to explore “how it might be possible to generate a pedagogy out of women’s double-edged discourse of speaking and silence” (p. 22). From a pedagogical perspective I have spent a great deal of energy trying to devise strategies to encourage women to talk more in the classroom. Instead, Lewis (1993) argues that “we need to understand women’s silence—the silence of all oppressed, exploited, and subordinate people—as in Bonnie Smith’s words ‘a counter language’” (p. 49).

This discussion of silence as power is touched on by Dean (1996) when she argues that when we, as citizens, construct ourselves in a string of hyphenated identities
we will necessarily invoke silence on certain issues arguing that we can only speak from one point of view. She argues that “instead of taking responsibility for my silences and omissions, I would conceal them behind proclamations of who ‘I am’” (p. 176). This reliance on identity as a justification for not accounting for others is enticing but extremely problematic.

The reason that I think this discussion of silence, in all of its forms, is so important is that the realization of reflective solidarity is contingent on an active exchange of views. Silence is not factored into this equation in any meaningful way, and I think that the complexities inherent in silence, inside or outside the classroom are critical to educating for citizenship.

It has always intrigued me how many different ways silence is used to engage with material through protest, reflection, resistance and yet how often as educators we perceive it to be lack of participation. One story that provided me with a good reminder of the use of silence as a form of protest and personal power was relayed by Deirdre in her discussion of a particularly challenging classroom experience in one of her graduate courses:

One of the students was a teacher who taught in a conservative community. She was an experienced high school teacher and was concerned about a number of social justice issues; however, the one that caused her a lot of difficulty was raising anything that had to do with sexual orientation because it was a pretty religious community. On the few occasions when she had, she’d have the parents calling and their ministers calling her and so she was complaining [to the class] about how difficult this issue is. And one of the students in the class, who was a young woman, a lesbian, got up and left. We could all see her getting a little bit consternated and I didn’t know what to do. She didn’t throw her books down or that sort of thing and after about five minutes one of the students went out to try to find her and couldn’t and it was pretty close to the end of class and I just ended class early because I wanted to go find the student. She came back in the room and she was really upset. She was finding it hard to just get the words out, but as she got them out it was anger at what she perceived as this straight woman’s
incredible sense of privilege. The student [who was a high school teacher in the conservative community] didn’t phrase it this way, but the way it was received was “I have the luxury to bring up this issue or not” versus this lesbian student whose partner had recently been beaten up and threatened. So it’s literally a question of life or death for this student, that’s the way she’s feeling, and so she was angry at this privilege. But the rest of the class was conflicted because this other student was not being homophobic. It was really tough because I couldn’t point to something that the other student had done that I could go back to her about, but I could definitely see why the other student was upset. She wrote about it in her journal a couple of times and she said how empowered she felt. She said that it was a mark of how safe she felt in the class that she could get up and leave. She made a statement and we all noticed and her point was made. She said she felt incredibly powerful, it was like a silent protest and she didn’t want to have to explain herself. She saw her refusal to speak as a political act.

In a much less positive but equally powerful use of silence as a strategy, I want to talk about how students complain about the ways that political correctness stifles dialogue by making certain people choose to remain silent. There are many instances where the overlapping themes that I have used to analyze this data merge in very obvious ways and the discussion of silence as resistance is one of those times. I discuss this issue in this section on voice and silence because I think that the act is double-edged in the sense that it may be a form of protest by some, but it results in making space for others.

In Shauna’s discussion of her emphasis on language, she described how some students argued that

This is too much political correctness and it actually shuts down the conversation. So the more you point out the power of language, the students say to me “the more I feel silenced.” So on the one hand I think we actually want to create a space in which we can talk to each other and be ready to have our thoughts and the language we use challenged. And that’s quite difficult because you don’t want to invite people in and then the first thing you do is start criticizing them. And I think for some people that’s the experience they had and I actually think that’s a problem. There’s work you need to do to be a role model and demonstrate the kind of public space you want to create in the classroom so that it happens. At the same time, I’ll be frank, part of me in some situations says “well I think it’s good you’re silenced.” I mean silenced in the sense that it gives a little bit more space to someone else and maybe you need to be thinking about what you’re saying. Because when they say they’re being silenced, it’s not necessarily that they’re
thinking about what they’re saying or being critical about their participation or tendency to dominate. Silence means many different things.

Educators need to acknowledge the silencing that many students may impose on themselves in courses that do not seem to incorporate their lived experiences. Mohanty’s (1994) discussion of settings in which “white students are constructed as marginal observers and students of colour as the real knowers” (p. 154) was particularly instructive in understanding silencing as a result of an imbalance in power. In a less obvious example, some men’s lack of engagement in feminist classes may result in a discussion that does little to deconstruct and challenge the patriarchal approach that characterizes the social problem. Instead, the women in the class, students and faculty, may become involved in awkward and apologetic contributions that further individualize problems such as domestic violence while ensuring that the men in the class do not feel under attack (for a discussion, see Lewis, 1993):

Sometimes if there is a man in the class who doesn’t really get it and is willing to ask his questions, the feminist students, the more radical students, who think they know the right answer, will be quite rude and almost dump on the man. He will then get defensive and sometimes silent which is sort of interesting. . . . And then I find myself in a bit of an ironic situation which is usually ending up spending a fair bit of energy making sure that the man feels ok including sometimes speaking with him outside the classroom. I find myself noticing when there are a couple of men in the classroom, or one man it’s even harder, and I find my focus going in the direction towards making the men feel comfortable. [Susan]

Mohanty (1994) talks about this process as one focused on the maintenance of harmony within the classroom, and it raises the issue of the extent of this problem and whether this same type of phenomenon occurs even when men are not actually present in the class. In a phenomenon related to this emphasis on a peaceful and comfortable classroom, Eyre (1993) demonstrates the regular misinterpretation of silence by educators as she describes a very vocal and aggressive response to a gay and a lesbian guest speaker
whom she had in her class. She notes that “the objections of those most threatened grew
closer as the critique grew stronger” (p. 281). There were no supportive voices raised as
those who were resisting became increasingly vocal; however, Eyre (1993) observes that
she “neglected to recognize the role silence plays in coeducational classrooms. In the
heat of the moment I assumed that silence meant affirmation of the dominant voices. I
neglected to consider alternative understandings of students’ silence” (p. 282).

In support of the perspective that there are multiple meanings and experiences that
should be represented in the curriculum, it is instructive to look to Nussbaum’s (1997)
discussion of gay and lesbian students’ views on the relative invisibility of homosexuality
in the curriculum. She notes that they described “the ways in which those deliberately
crafted silences were linked with an experience of second-class citizenship: they felt that
they were being told, on each such occasion, that a feature of themselves was so
embarrassing that it could not even be a topic of reasoned discussion in the academic
community” (p. 243).

In an interesting take on curricular silence and the responsibility of educators,
Konradi (1993) talks about the risks associated with leaving silence unexamined as she
discusses how we can effectively address a difficult subject such as sexual assault. If
students do not contribute to this type of discussion, there is the very real likelihood that
the issue will be dealt with in an abstract fashion and we risk further marginalizing their
experiences. In an effort to discuss sexual assault in a way “that respects the emotional
nature of the topic and increases survivors’ feelings of trust and safety in the classroom”
(Konradi, 1993, p. 15), we need to acknowledge the risk of students feeling vulnerable
because of the purposeful abstraction of the issue. Deirdre describes some of these types
of tensions:

I don’t think there’s any easy answer to that because who will feel silenced by what? The range is incredible. For me a common example is when I talk about sexual orientation and I have a Christian student say something that I consider an affront to human rights, I will raise it at the risk of silencing that student because I feel on that particular issue people are not always the bravest. . . . When you’re a professor and facilitating you’ve got to think about the overall scheme. It’s like political activism, you’ve got to choose your moments and if you’re pouncing on every little possible ambiguous moment, you’re going to shut people down and they’re not going to engage in an exchange of ideas.

I wrestle with how to deal with heterosexist and homophobic speech in the classroom as I support Cornwell’s (1998) assertion that this type of speech does “not foster more speech (generally considered a valuable reason for protecting speech)” (p. 109); instead, this type of speech is a weapon that tries to harm the target of the speech. Cornwell argues that “those of us in the classroom who hold dear the ideal of academic freedom, and who (maybe too easily) allow it to be translated into an absolutist position on freedom of expression in the academy, must address the oppressive qualities of that position” (p. 112). Matsuda (1993) shares this concern about the emotional toll of bigoted speech in her discussion of the responsibility of the university to act in the face of this speech. She argues that “tolerance of hate speech is not tolerance borne by the community at large. Rather, it is a psychic tax imposed on those least able to pay” (cited in Cornwell, 1998, p. 109).

The focus of Dean’s model of reflective solidarity is the achievement of solidarity across our differences. One of the most common mechanisms to facilitate this goal is curricular and pedagogical pluralism. An important point of tension in these efforts is how the equality/difference duality (discussed in Chapter 3) expresses itself in classroom discussions. This chapter examined these dynamics by exploring the participants’
experiences with voice and silence as they navigate these classroom discussions of
difference. These concepts of pluralism, voice and silence are central to my presentation
of reflective accountability in Chapter 8 and lay the foundation for the following
discussion of resistance, risk and safety that contributes to this rethinking of
accountability.
Chapter VII

Resistance, Safety and Risk as Pedagogical Experiences

The primary goal of my dissertation has been to engage with Dean's concept of reflective solidarity, the literature regarding educating for citizenship and my participants' comments regarding their philosophy and practice. To this point I have discussed some of the ways that citizenship has been articulated, the potential of the university as a site of citizenship education, and the strategies used to engage in transformative practice. I examined the role of educators in promoting a discourse characterized by a communicative we, through discursive universalism and a situated hypothetical third. My goal in this chapter is to examine how an educational experience designed to promote citizenship and social justice will be imbued with resistance and risk-taking and all of the pedagogical challenges that accompany these characteristics.

Resistance as a Response to Multiple Subjectivities

Ng (1993) illustrates the potential risks associated with critical pedagogy as she discusses the process by which a university administration dealt with a male student's complaint about her teaching, "charging that [she] used the class as a platform for feminism" (p. 189). Ng illustrates the propensity of our attitudes and our policies regarding harassment and instructional conduct to individualize student complaints instead of looking at some of the structural imperatives that contextualize each incident. She notes that "teaching and learning against the grain is not easy, comfortable, or safe. It is protracted, difficult, uncomfortable, painful and risky" (p. 201). Ng reminds us that while much of the literature regarding critical pedagogy explores the experiences of
teachers, our students are also taking a more difficult journey than many assume, and it is within this journey that we need to understand better the resistance embedded in some student complaints and how safety and risk factor into that resistance.

Dean (1996) concludes her argument by contending that reflective solidarity "is a risky business. It can always fail, collapsing under the weight of those who deny their responsibility for the other, coming up against intransigent vocabularies and languages, and prematurely offering closure. It remains burdened by its very contextuality. Old habits are hard to break; we often resist inquiry into those practices that have given meaning to our lives" (p. 181). Dean’s expectation regarding the resistance to be experienced among the general public can be explored more specifically in the context of educational settings. There is a complex set of factors that contribute to the resistance displayed in university classrooms; however, I want to focus on two particular sources of resistance that are connected to Dean’s discussion of reflective solidarity.

The first thread relates to the above quote from Dean which highlights our investment in our knowledge and experience. Kumashiro (2001) argues that “the crisis that results from unlearning, then, is a necessary and desirable part of anti-oppressive education. By implication, learning to overcome one’s desire for the comforting repetition of normative knowledges, identities, and experiences involves learning to desire the discomforting process of unlearning. Desiring change involves desiring to learn through crisis” (p. 8). These tensions are exemplified in Deirdre’s comments regarding the first cohort of the Humanities and Social Justice Teacher Education
Program\textsuperscript{12} and its discussion of issues of oppression:

I assumed the social justice cohort was supportive at some level because sometimes when you teach Ed Studies 314, you can have a fair contingent of students who really don’t care about social justice issues and are quite resistant to those themes. . . . Well, I found that that assumption was correct and not correct because a fair number of students come to social justice through their church and they tend to think of social justice mainly in the context of poverty and sometimes a charity model towards it which I was challenging. And when we got to the subject of homophobia and heterosexism, I ran into quite a bit of resistance from some of the Christian students. In fact one of them came to my office and told me that she felt like “an oppressed minority” in my class—not necessarily because of my attitudes but because of the whole atmosphere of the cohort. So that presented a particular set of challenges for me.

Another aspect of this discomfort is explored by Hoodfar (1992) as she observes that students are, not surprisingly, resistant to critical approaches to learning as these strategies tend to challenge their familiarity with the traditional educational process.

A second major thread of resistance is highlighted in Ellsworth’s (1989) observation “that a peril of critical teaching lies in its underlying assumption that the experiences and knowledge of different social groups can be captured, defined, understood, and shared by others, thereby overlooking the gap between living an experience and learning about it” (p. 305). Marlee’s comments demonstrate the resistance that is based on being invested in one perspective and unwilling or unable to see a new way:

The discussion about Africville\textsuperscript{13} was a hard one because people would not engage with the racism that happened. It was all sort of legal explanations: “Well,
they really thought they were doing the right thing”... The students just couldn’t get it, they just didn’t get it. It wasn’t that they were even actively resisting it but in that context, in that period of time, there was no way that I would be able to really take their hand, and it was frustrating.

Resistance needs to be understood as both an obstacle and an opportunity. One of the most common ways that resistance manifests itself is in students’ challenges to the curriculum citing irrelevance and politicization. One set of challenges can be understood in the question, “Why are we still talking about this?” When students resist by arguing that “we’ve talked about this enough,” Jo-ann asks herself what is behind that attitude? And how much energy do I want to expend on this individual? I’ve been learning about First Nations all my life and I still don’t get enough of it. So what is out there is minuscule in comparison to what one can engage in—so that comment is a form of systemic racism. It’s trying to say “We’re going to let you in, but only give you this much space and once you’ve had your fifteen minutes then we’ll go on to the other more important things.” So all I can say is I have a particular purpose and a mission and a job and this is who I am and it consumes me and this is what I’m going to do and I’ll keep doing it.

Gerry and Deirdre echoed these comments as they focused on feminism as a spark for resistance:

The resistance to feminism is that, “that’s something that has been dealt with.” So the latest tactic is that “you must be out of date, this is no longer an issue.” Sexuality is also one that is talked about as an issue that has been dealt with and we don’t want to talk about it anymore... It’s kind of interesting the way some students use history and space... geography—another time another place. [Gerry]

A lot of the Tech Ed guys were quite opposed to my feminist leanings and would sit in the back of the room with their arms folded and it was very disruptive. It has just a chilling impact on a classroom if you have five students basically on strike... When I compared that experience to the same class that I had in Kamloops a few years later, it was really a different atmosphere. (It was a much smaller teacher education program, so students versus 800 at UBC, and much less fragmented by various specializations.) The students really took care of each other... They cared about each other across their differences. [Deirdre]

A second set of challenges presented by students can be characterized by the
statement “your agenda is interfering with what we are supposed to be learning.” Wendy notes she “experienced some resistance from students not so much for the teaching methods but more for the equity agenda that I think is important to bring into the discourse. And again, it’s from those students who come in with the commerce business mind set where they just want to get out there and make a bunch of money.”

Marlee and Susan cited very similar characteristics in the resistance that manifests itself in their classrooms:

A strong resistance here is what I’ve talked about before which is the more amorphous resistance. So in Property the resistance takes the form of “I know what the study of law is supposed to entail and I know what you’re doing is not what I thought I was going to do and I’m missing out. I’m not getting all this information and these skills that I should be getting because you’re teaching this other stuff.” So the resistance takes the form that they’re not going to listen because they think it’s not relevant, and so I spend so much time, hopefully not feeling or appearing defensive, showing the relevance of what I’m doing. So there’s that resistance. [Marlee]

So they know they are being taught by a feminist and I probably make that clear. Many of them will also know I’m lesbian and usually I’ll let that out somehow in the first couple of weeks of class. All those things together mean that students who are not feeling like those issues are what they want to hear about begin to think that’s all they’re hearing about. It’s really funny. So I get these evaluations saying odd things like “She’s nice and dresses nicely, but can’t we have less same sex issues and race and gender and do the real law.” So there’s a severing of law and social issues. [Susan]

The critical component of this discussion is that there is no concomitant recognition that more privileged identities are also embedded in curriculum. The normative lens is not challenged because it is assumed that it is an objective voice. Challenging the taken-for-grantedness of this assumption provides an important foundation for the critical analysis of citizenship education.

Another type of resistance is the “what about me?” resistance. For example in child custody discussions in Susan’s law class
Students want to say "fathers are discriminated against, why can’t you just make that point in your classroom instead of trying to show that there might be a more complex case to be made that women have been discriminated against in the system." Students who are not either sympathetic to or very knowledgeable about feminist and anti-racist progressive scholarship generally, or progressive critiques of law, have more license to dismiss points that are made from those perspectives. I think they may well start speaking out and probably already have started speaking out in an overtly challenging way in class. . . . I think there might be more space for quite difficult points and debates to arise at this stage. I don’t know how to deal with that particularly. I guess the only thing I really try to do in my classrooms is try to give students a sense of history and that the changes that women and other marginalized groups have been asking for didn’t come out of nowhere, that there were reasons.

In a slightly different take on the "what about me?" thread, Marlee noted that

There’s just the general political differences that people have that can set up resistance so all the struggles that happen in the world happen in the classroom. First Nations students getting pissed off, not listening and walking out because there’s a white-looking First Nations woman lawyer that I’ve had come in to speak and she doesn’t look native enough. So all of the debates that happen internally within groups also play out in the classroom. So that’s a form of resistance on a very different side.

Educators need to be cognizant of the fact that despite detractors’ rhetoric regarding the ivory towers of academe, our classrooms do, in many ways, represent a microcosm of society, and one of the levels of similarity is in regards to resistance.

Some faculty resist in a parallel fashion by not incorporating gender or other issues in their curriculum because of their assumption that it is happening elsewhere in the students’ programs. Wendy observed that she “definitely saw that as the final resistance ‘they’ll get it from her courses or the other faculty who do that kind of stuff, we don’t have to do it in ours.’” In support of these comments, Susan noted that she thought some faculty had the attitude that “now they had a feminist chair and a couple of other feminists teaching various courses—so nobody else had to pay attention to gender or social context. . . . they didn’t feel they had to contaminate or change their approach. I
think that's still there."

All of the participants discussed a variety of strategies that they used to address the resistance in their classrooms and in support of reflective solidarity. Many of them emphasized encouraging students to take on the perspective of the Other.

One of the papers that worked incredibly well this year was about a woman who has been harassed. She's a lesbian and she's being harassed in her workplace in a terrible way. And she wrote about it as a way of trying to deal with the situation, empowering herself... the students read this and it had just come out so they couldn't put it into another space and time. They were very moved by it, very troubled by it—apparently this particular individual’s had a lot of trouble as a result of writing this article because it didn’t stop the harassment as she had hoped. So that was very immediate for the students. So I think part of it is just getting those up to the minute readings. Revising the course list so that they can’t discount it as dated, and using material that is more immediate. Autobiography touches them in ways that doesn’t allow them to push it aside so much. [Gerry]

I have highlighted the broad range of examples of resistance discussed by participants. One of the ways that these examples seem to take shape is around a particular identity that is being resisted or that seems to shape the nature of the resistance. In her discussion of queer pedagogy, Britzman (1995) reminds educators as we confront resistance that if students are inculcated with heterosexist curriculum and life experience, we need to situate their resistance to a more diverse curriculum in that context. We are not born bigots!

In many ways, I have organized my discussion of resistance in such a way that 
“resistance is portrayed as a ‘danger,’ ‘a problem’ to be solved” (Moore, 1998, p. 44). In an effort to introduce some less common interpretations of resistance, I wanted to examine how our responses to resistance need to acknowledge the missed opportunities that may result from shutting down the resistance or ignoring it. This tact becomes important as I talk about the need to be accountable for the nature of the dialogue in our
classrooms:

I think perhaps we’re too quick to call something backlash. . . . I think sometimes there’s something else we can do in addition to naming and that is to say, “What do you mean?” “What are the threads attached to that statement?” And it’s a tricky one because some people could argue that you are giving air time and space to a particular kind of backlash and you’re fueling the very thing that we’re trying to fight against. But I guess I’ve found myself a few times experimenting with “So you think white males have no rights anymore?” Acknowledge it and repeat it back and I think that’s more about teaching and learning, and I sometimes wonder about this strategy of saying that the only thing we should say, and I’m not saying that we shouldn’t say this, but assuming the only thing we should say is, “Well, I feel uncomfortable with that” or “Think about how that might make the other people in the class feel”. . . . There needs to be more because citizenship is about risk and danger. [Shauna]

Second, I have talked about resistance on the part of students to more critical pedagogical approaches. An equally important, and perhaps more productive, discussion of resistance relates to encouraging students to resist in settings that are not incorporating more critical approaches to their learning. The multiple manifestations of resistance are particularly important for this dissertation as I have wrestled with appropriate responses to positions that resist the inclusion of lesbians and gay men as equal, contributing members of society, particularly when these positions are grounded in religion. Presumably their resistance should be included in any discussion of student resistance in the face of exclusion of their points of view. However, it is important to note that I am not talking about diversity of opinions, I am talking about a critical engagement with the positions that are taken. Smith (1994) argues that “our jobs as teachers should include active resistance to our students’ active resistance, which, while it does not require the assumption of a traditional teaching position, does draw a purely student-centered pedagogy into question” (p. 17). It is through this interrogation of oppressive views that I believe educators are satisfying their responsibilities in educating for citizenship. It is
this critical examination that will leave some students feeling silenced.

A recent example that comes to mind is a workshop on lesbian and gay issues that I was conducting for a student services division of a university college. After about forty-five minutes of conversation during which I had introduced a variety of issues, including the idea that often individuals' reactions to gay and lesbian students is grounded in judgments of immorality based on some interpretation of scripture and this provides for some difficult contextual issues. A participant raised her hand and made the following comment: "You are making this very difficult for me and I think others in the room. I am a Christian and what you are saying is making me feel uncomfortable." My response was that I didn’t believe I was making it difficult as there is nothing inherent in Christianity that necessitates an anti-gay perspective (Spong, n.d.). So, I thought what was causing the difficulty was the conflict she was experiencing as the intolerance of her faith system was being challenged. It is difficult to address these kinds of issues in ways that remain respectful when a position being forwarded is grounded in discrimination and intolerance. It is to this dilemma that I turn to in my final chapter as I discuss reflective accountability.

Davies (1989) provides provocative examples of the processes through which gender is constructed, highlighting the role of both the speaker and the listener. Of particular interest is her discussion of the coercive nature of various discourses. Davies’ most compelling illustration of the power of the masculine/feminine dualism is presented in her discussion of homosexuality. I continue to be amazed at the power that the homosexual label wields as a mechanism to coerce individuals to adopt heterosexist paradigms.
The False Dichotomy of Safety and Risk

My goal in this section is to pick up on Dean’s (1996) discussion of risk-taking. I have already explored several aspects of risk-taking in the university classroom in my discussion of the role of the personal, power, pluralism and resistance. However, at this point, I would like to address it by talking about safety as it is so often juxtaposed with risk.

In particular, I want to use Ellsworth’s (1997) argument “that pedagogy is a much messier and more inconclusive affair than the vast majority of our educational theories and practices make it out to be” (p. 8). Gerry highlights this uncertainty in her description of her responses to more contentious comments:

In some ways it is just kind of a passive thing. The thing is to be responsive if someone asks a question that seems hostile, open it up in a kind of respectful way—to help them open it up a bit. . . . I guess I also try to question myself as we go along, and try to open up the research and leave it kind of messy. There’s messiness to this world, including our research world. So by keeping the research messy, that seems to invite more of a conversation I think. So it’s not smoothing over.

Shauna takes this state of uncertainty to another level as she describes her willingness to navigate the messiness with her students:

We do our best in the moment and I think my job after a difficult situation is to say, “Ok, that was an interesting moment.” What we call reflective practice. “Why is it that I did that?” So you actually sat and thought about it so next time you might try something different. I mean, it’s just a big experiment. . . . it’s very important never to ignore your responsibility and your authority as a teacher, but can you do that at the same time as you make transparent your own struggle? So you can say to a class, “Oh, I don’t know what to think. I don’t know what to do right now. Let’s just take a moment.”

I support the idea that intellectual discomfort should characterize learning as ideas, traditions and beliefs are challenged, shaped and replaced and that teaching in a manner that supports this type of transformative experience is difficult. Ideally, courses
are designed in a way that promotes passionate exchanges and an intellectually unsettling dialogue; however, there are very clearly guidelines that can and should be established that reduce the likelihood of learners being compromised or harmed. In our conversation, Deirdre captured the complexities inherent in efforts aimed at providing a safe learning environment:

In one sense the classroom can be seen as a microcosm of participatory democracy, so how does this actually work when people do not agree and sometimes violently disagree. . . . What are people's safety levels? We have to risk things in order to learn.

What about these personal growth issues, they're not traditionally something that people in Science think about, but it is something that Science One really thinks about. It's more like 80% of their effort is going to providing a nurturing environment where students can develop to see themselves as scientists. But a lot of that is the emotional development and having the confidence to question, having the willingness to go out and take risks. It's really focused on "Who am I as a person in this world around me?" and "What are my relationships with others around me?" [Maria]

As I discussed earlier, reflective solidarity necessitates sharing our stories as a mechanism to understand and respect the specificity of our experiences. With this sharing there are risks and expectations of those who are listening, and these risks are magnified by power differentials that characterize the conversations that occur in our classrooms; however, there are a number of ways that we, as teachers, manage the risk-taking of our students in the classroom:

I guess I want to take my own risks and not push other people to take risks. I think you choose your own risks and so my emphasis would be on providing a safe environment in which students could choose to take a risk. . . . I create the teacher-less discussion groups and that's a space where students, if they don't take a risk, they think they might next time. So maybe it doesn't have to happen then. You create moments and they'll take it up later maybe or think about it. [Gerry]

One of the things that [a professor in Science One] tries very hard to do is to encourage Science students to become risk takers and to argue that you can only learn when you take risks. . . . There's one part of me that says, "Yes, encouraging
students to take risks is a really important part of growth and of course what you want.” Basically, we want them climbing rock faces in a harness, but the harness and the rock face is different for each student, and it’s really hard to be sure that it’s working . . . So I think that it’s sort of like falling in love, it’s a very dangerous thing to do. It’s extremely rewarding and you can’t really have the experience without taking the risk of being hurt. I think learning is a lot like that, and of course what we’re always trying to do is to provide the challenge, yet make the challenge be at a safe level that the student understands that they’re not going to be hurt forever if they fail at it or something goes wrong, but that’s really hard to judge. [Maria]

Jakubowski (2001) talks about the risk associated with certain pedagogical approaches and particular courses or disciplines, noting that

However committed instructors may be to creative, critical pedagogical approaches to race, gender, sexuality, and class-based differences, we often hesitate to put theory into practice because of the associated cultural and political risks. Specifically, as teachers, we risk: 1) looking incompetent to our colleagues and students if we experiment unsuccessfully with a new way of teaching (Brookfield 1995: 232); and 2) being marginalized by a hostile culture that views the critically responsive academic as “subversive.” (p. 62)

There are some parallels between pressures that move educators away from controversial topics and the reasons that students want to steer away from these topics, including their concern that they can not challenge their professor because of repercussions on their grades or because their professors have all the knowledge. Karen raised the issue of partiality in her comments about negotiation of power as an impediment to risk-taking:

There had to be that turn-around from the very beginning when I started the first course with them. They had to understand that I was taking risks. I was not an expert in everything and that I was vulnerable myself. In order to be critical I think you have to understand about being vulnerable. “You’re at UBC. Aren’t you supposed to be the expert?” I just don’t feel like hiding behind that anymore.

There are risks that individuals’ core values might be challenged, that a topic might raise difficult personal issues, that a pedagogical approach might discourage the participation of certain students. Obviously, the gravity of these risks varies in
magnitude. Maria told a particularly interesting story about a student who had been conditioned in the Science One Program that asking questions was "ok" but who apparently unknowingly challenged the classroom order in a different class by asking a professor to explain a concept that the student did not understand. The professor reprimanded the student for what was perceived to be insubordination. Maria notes that "After they complete Science One, [the students] are on their own and it can be very, very dangerous. . . . This student was on his own and he felt betrayed. Betrayed by the system. Betrayed a bit by Science One."

Konradi (1993) argues that "one creates safer spaces and/or builds trust by making parameters of participation explicit, removing or diminishing surprises, specifying power relations, working to level hierarchies, and distributing responsibility among everyone present" (p. 17). Konradi's emphasis on accountability supports Dean's discussion of reflective solidarity as it "conceives the ties connecting us as communicative and open. This openness creates a space for accountability, enabling us to grasp the ways this notion of solidarity no longer blocks us from difference, but instead provides a bridge between identity and universality" (Dean, 1996, p. 30). Konradi (1993) talks about a number of strategies, acknowledging that students will not be familiar with many of these approaches as students are more comfortable with what Freire (1993/1996) described as the banking method. Some of the strategies participants talked about to address the tensions of safety and risk inherent in their classrooms include: setting ground rules; confronting the reality of the emotional; critical discussion of language; and, at a very practical level, sharing the board with students to make announcements and learning names of students:
I developed this ground rules exercise for the first time because both courses, like most of my courses, deal with rather emotionally charged issues. So on the first day of class I had them get into small groups and generate some ground rules for how the class would go. The reason I thought of it is that I talked about it as a mechanism for creating a safer classroom and then I talked to them about how there is no such thing as a safe space and you need to be cautious about the sorts of things you reveal in a classroom of virtual strangers. . . . I was impressed with them [teacher education students] because they were trying to fight against a silencing based on political correctness. They were trying to create space for people to really state their views and not feel shut down. To be honest, not to take offence at the slightest thing. So they were generating a lot of ground rules that would create a space where conflict could occur, which kind of goes against what these things [ground rules] usually seem to be about which is “let’s make everything nice and cozy.” [Deirdre]

In creating democratic space I think you have to trust in both the process and yourself and others to actually engage in that sort of very democratic process—a dialogic process. And there are lots of issues around creating a sense of trust. Which is not the same thing as safety, because I have a lot of difficulty with this notion of safety in the classroom. Because I mean safe for whom? If you achieved all of the conditions for one person’s safety, it might mean the annihilation of somebody else. So I struggle with what that means . . . I mean it has to be safe to the extent that someone can’t be under continual threat. I mean there’s no way that you can actually pay attention to learning if you have that experience, but at the same time if you are actually learning something, you are putting yourself at risk. Because you’re changing an idea, you’re making a shift. Sometimes you’re going from not knowing to knowing. But sometimes you’re going from a sense of knowing to a different kind of knowing. So those relationships between risk and safety are quite complex. And I think some of the recipes for creating a safe classroom need to be looked at a little bit more carefully. [Susan]

In one such examination of safety, Dawn provides a different spin on a common assumption about feminist pedagogies:

I don’t have this belief that the classroom can ever be a safe place, so I never operate under the assumption that that’s going to happen. I’m a little bit different than a lot of feminist teachers, and it’s not that I try to get people to separate from their personal lives, but I will tell my students that it is important for a period of time to be able to separate from their personal context and the reason I do that is because I’m really against the idea of “If it feels right, it has to be right.” So what I always try to accomplish in a lot of my classes is for people to recognize something that they have believed to be true for a long time, put it out there and examine it in a little bit of a different way. . . . Maybe I adopt it because it feels safer for me as a teacher. . . . I’ve told students there’s been things that I believed
in for years and years and the biggest breakthrough for me ever intellectually was learning how to not make an emotional commitment to things I believe. . . . The last thing I want is people that are entirely emotionally driven, which you often get in women’s studies classes, with a firm conviction that they already know the answer. I just really really try to discourage that.

While we can try to manage the risks, inevitably there will be risks taken and there will be consequences for students and for educators. Any discussion of accountability has to address a number of risks, including the absence of reciprocity, disclosures that cause emotional harm to the speaker or listener, and inappropriate probing of speakers, whereby a student is pressured to give testimony based on their assumed affiliations. Gerry talked about the balancing act inherent in trying to explore comments made by students without making them feel they are being interrogated:

In one course I tried to really open up the curriculum and it was a bit hair-raising actually. I think it was alright in the end, but it was just too exhausting. [there was a mix of geography and women’s studies students and] it was good for the geography students because I think the women’s studies students were just so open around some topics that I had the sense that the geography students were like this (mouth hanging open)—as a shirt would be pulled off and the tattoos would be displayed and then we would hear about branding in the lesbian community. I found myself becoming the ethnographer, asking “So what is the difference between a silver tattoo and this” [other tattoo]. And so there was a sense of lots of different cultures at the table, but because we spent a lot of time trying to make a space where it was comfortable for everyone, there was way too much we couldn’t question. For example, when the branding came up, the student who was talking about it, talked about branding as being meaningful in terms of ownership—branding your partner. And there are real issues that you need to raise around ownership within a lesbian relationship—like what’s going on here? And yet I think you need to have a homogeneous group to push on certain issues. It felt like we had to work on comfort so that we couldn’t work on critical examination to the extent that I would want to. I guess I wasn’t sure enough about that student to want to push her. And it wasn’t her personal issue. I mean I think it wasn’t a practice for her alone to talk about and defend. So it would have to be somehow turned around so it’s not a personal kind of discussion. It’s a discussion around social practices. So sometimes that distance of the academic gaze is very useful because it gives you the distance so you can look at an issue critically. It has to be taken out of the personal. Always trying to get the critique away from the personal and putting it into its social context—I think that’s really important.
Fisch (1998) cautions that “we as teachers may also forget the tumult of scholarly debate as our classroom routines become more polished and ordered over time. But the classes that are tense and messy, that make the students uncomfortable and that make me sweat as a teacher, are, I think, the most productive” (pp. 40-41). In describing just such a messy situation, she talks about how a student announced in class that “she hated white people” (p. 41). Fisch is white and she describes how she took a few moments to try to reassure myself that I shouldn’t feel attacked, that the student’s remarks were a testament to the open classroom I was trying to cultivate, not a slap in the face to the one white person in the room. . . . Whatever my personal unease, and perhaps because the student’s remark had driven me out of the conversation, the students were able to connect with and therefore transform a piece of the history of the politics of skin color into a piece of their present. . . . Such [painful] moments are not meant to be resolved or defused; they are to be reassured. Therein lies the education: learning to live with the uncomfortable awareness that others see things radically differently than we do and that we are, therefore, always partially ignorant even in our knowledge. (p. 41)

I think there are important parallels between Gerry’s story about the lesbian student’s discussion of branding and Fisch’s (1998) analysis of her story, particularly surrounding the tensions inherent in trying to make the classroom a safe place for others while at the same time recognizing that safety for some will, in many cases, mean discomfort for others. I concur with Fisch (1998) that the situation that she discussed presented a tremendous learning opportunity; however, I was disappointed that she did not challenge the racist remark despite her observation that the attack was personal rather than curriculum-based. My response to Fisch’s lack of engagement with the remark raises the question of whether teachers are able to use silence as a legitimate response in a classroom setting. I think there is a different onus on educators to respond actively in the type of context discussed by Fisch. There are a number of possible consequences of her
silence, including an assumption by other students about the acceptability of the student's remark, assumptions about the ability of the professor to respond to this remark, and possible feelings of abandonment similar to themes that were raised by some of Shauna's students when she did not respond to comments made by a student. This is an interesting dilemma as Shauna and other participants discussed the idea of making space for students to intervene and the idea that one has to select one's battles carefully so as to engage in the most productive openings.

Extending the discussion of context, Karen argues that we need to be attentive to issues of risk with our international students who are going back to circumstances that may make them particularly vulnerable because of the difficulty of finding crevices in which they can act on their learning. For example, these students are engaging in a critical analysis of colonial and post-colonial issues and then going back to systems that are grounded in the very ideas they have challenged. Karen finds that her best advice, however inadequate it may seem, continues to be to remind them that "these are the tensions that you will have in front of you and you need to stay in the tensions and stay in the struggle." Berman's (1997) discussion of social consciousness-raising reminded me how recent our attention to these struggles is when he notes that "issues of political conflict and controversy were not present in school until late in my school years and then only in the form of academic discussion and debate. The deeper questions, the feelings, the desire to do something about problems were not dealt with" (p. 2). Berman's analysis of social consciousness-raising focused on schooling; however, I think its applicability to the university context is evidenced by the ongoing debate about the most appropriate focus of a university education.
Wendy’s comments illustrate some aspects of this debate as she talked about how the business/commerce leanings of a cohort of kinesiology students interfered with a student’s effort to problematize the culture that they are so eager to work within. Wendy’s observation reminded me that the very act of providing context can be fraught with risks:

One of the students was working in a community centre in a very low-income area, and she was saying one of the ideas they had was to try to run programs for prostitutes because their assumption was that these young men and women didn’t have anywhere to go at night and were hanging out in the streets and if they could just bring them in and do something for them. And there were these sneers and laughter from other students in the class as she was trying to talk about this. So I tried to engage with her, but she was very aware of the sneers and laughter—but she was a mature student, she’d been at work for awhile and so she kept up. We were able to keep the conversation going, but it was difficult and I know other students in the class saw that and said “I’m never taking that risk. I’m never going there.”

Susan talked about an experience that reminded her of the risks associated with the specificity of experience and the resistance that comes from a personal investment by students in the institutions she critiqued:

In the Feminist Legal Studies class we don’t do a lot of family stuff in the course, but we do have a session on lesbian issues, and inevitably issues around marriage and the definition of spouse come up. Even though I said several times that no one was saying it was a bad thing to choose to get married, but basically people should recognize that there are certain privileges that come with marriage. Still these two women who were getting married got so defensive and we ended up spending a huge amount of energy trying to make them feel ok about their personal choice. So it’s not just when it happens with “the boys”. . . . These women were very defensive, despite the fact that truly, I don’t feel like I go in there with a radical, feminist approach to marriage. I do have a critique but it’s meant to be a fairly nuanced approach to the whole issue and so it’s how it gets heard.

Bell, Morrow and Tastoglou’s (1999) comments regarding these issues of investment are instructive as they observe that “creating an environment where students feel sufficiently ‘safe,’ affirmed, and nurtured to talk about their own experiences is
crucial. However, getting students to ‘deconstruct’ or ‘politicize’ their experiences and move forward from there is a more difficult challenge” (pp. 37-38). Shauna’s reflections on safety in the classroom and her experience with a First Nations student who came to her objecting to her use of the term *North American culture* were helpful as I wrestled with the multi-layered experience of safety. The student explained how that homogeneous concept excluded her from the conversation:

Thinking about that moment actually makes me think about safety because you could interpret that as she is feeling safe enough for her to say something. She didn’t say it to the whole class, she still wasn’t there, but she could say it to me. And yet other students were telling me how unsafe they felt. So there’s a paradox with that whole idea about safety in the classroom. So I created enough space for her to say something, although not quite enough that she’s going to say something to the group. And that begs the question of whether that’s her responsibility anyway. And yet others are saying “I’m not going to say a word because you’re just going to unpack what I just said.” We need to ask, safe for whom? [Shauna]

Wahl, Perez, Deegan, Sanchez and Applegate’s (2000) discussion of “the controversial classroom” highlights a number of important issues connected to educators’ risk-taking. Certain classes are more likely to have greater controversy in terms of content and pedagogy. Given this recognition there needs to be greater acknowledgment of these differences through departmental and institutional strategies so that individual faculty do not feel vulnerable and exposed (Ng, 1991, 1993).

Despite all of the discussions of the potential of risk-taking in classrooms, there still needs to be respectful attention paid to the struggles that many students may experience with pedagogical approaches that raise the potential for risk-taking. Perhaps it is “unreasonable to expect every student to make use of broader social and integrative analysis when they may still be struggling to identify and affirm their own life experiences” (Bell, Morrow, & Tatsoglou, 1999, p. 37). Further, some students may
have so little experience with more progressive pedagogical approaches that they may need to take a step back by first simply telling their stories and having others share their experiences.

It is never easy discussing controversial and intense topics; however, an often overlooked risk that is related to this discussion is the risk associated with our silence, however well we’ve rationalized that silence. Deirdre reminded me of a warning that Nellie Stromquist (a guest speaker in our class) gave the entire class when Stromquist said that “If you don’t do these things [as a professor] when you’re untenured, you’ll be in a pattern where you don’t do them when you’re tenured.” Too often in our effort to be less exposed, we actually make ourselves more vulnerable because of our lack of engagement with material that has the potential to disrupt and transform our thinking and the thinking of our students. It is to this spirit of risk-taking as a pedagogical responsibility that I turn in my final chapter.
Chapter VIII

Conclusion: Moving from Reflective Solidarity to Reflective Accountability

When I began this project my focus was on explicating the relationship between educators' philosophical commitments to educating for democratic citizenship or social justice and the actual practices that we employ in this enterprise. I used Dean's concept of reflective solidarity as a framework to explore these questions, as she addressed one of the central themes of critical and feminist pedagogy—communicating across our differences. I was intrigued by Dean's work, as education would seem to be a critical site of the work she envisioned in achieving reflective solidarity, yet she does not address the role of educational institutions in providing a venue for discursive relationships.

Three more specific reasons that fuelled my desire to use reflective solidarity as a framework to examine educating for citizenship in the university revolved around some criticisms of Dean's work. First, I was motivated by the limited discussion by Dean about the locations that might house and facilitate the exchanges that characterize the communicative relationships embedded in reflective solidarity (Love, 1997; Tamplin, 1997). Second, Dean does not adequately explore the problem of access that is embedded in a politics of discourse. Who is involved in the conversation and who is not? Whose voices are perceived to have more legitimacy? What are the dynamics of those normative judgments? In her critique of Solidarity of Strangers, Cherniavsky (1998) notes that "wishing to redress historical exclusions, Dean affirms access to the other through open-ended discourse, but the prior condition of establishing such a discourse is, precisely, the access to the other that history denies me" (p. 273). This critique of the absence of a meaningful discussion of inequality and power and the consequences of this omission
Third, Dean (1996) contends that “racist and patriarchal norms recognize difference. What they do not do is allow difference to be a valued aspect of our lives or include it as a component of equal respect. Moreover, they explicitly deny our accountability toward others who are not like us, disrupting the solidarity of our interrelationship” (p. 174). Clearly, this is an attempt by Dean to address substance; however, her approach of using a sweeping statement devoid of context or specifics results in a theoretical and conceptual dead end on this issue. My most important criticism of Dean’s work is this lack of attention to the substance of the discourse that she argues characterizes reflective solidarity. I hope my dissertation contributes to extending Dean’s conversation by applying it to the university and integrating more practical strategies and experiences.

In her review of Solidarity of Strangers, Rosenberg (1997) noted that “what I wish Dean most is an extended trip to a part of the world where a dialogue between opposing parties has repeatedly broken down: Israel, Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Rwanda, to name a few. I think that she would gain a great deal from such an experience. She would have a chance to test out her theory of solidarity on some of the toughest turf” (p. 9). In this dissertation I have argued that Dean does not need to go abroad to find some difficult terrain for the application of her model. While it was not part of my initial thinking about the goals of my project, my participants were very clear that classroom discussions of sexual orientation, heterosexism and homophobia presented some of the most difficult challenges inherent in the type of communication across difference that Dean speaks about.
Ultimately, the question of content became central as I explored the importance and the diversity of conceptions of difference, understanding, respectful exchange, listening and silence. I argue that Dean’s emphasis on the situated, hypothetical third is the mechanism that should be most cognizant of the issue of content; however, Dean’s primary emphasis is on the process associated with critical discourse and not the context within which this conversation occurs. The Other, through the situated, hypothetical third, is examined not in terms of the specifics of the experience they bring, but for the fact that they bring a perspective. The substance of the discourse is important for examining the nature of the contributions of the situated, hypothetical third and is critical to determining the power imbalances that make the presence of an actual third less likely.

Given my emphasis on some of the weaknesses of Dean’s model, one might ask why I used her theory. I respond by saying that I was drawn by her optimism regarding the opportunities available as we break down the oppositional qualities of many discussions across differences. I find her attention to debate and conflict as something that needs to be embraced to be a refreshing contrast to principles of discourse that stress objectivity, neutrality and consensus. The room that she makes for passionate and invested positions is woven throughout her argument and provides a provocative framework within which to explore educating for citizenship and social justice.

Dean (1996) unpacks the opportunities and limitations of identity politics as she presents her staged approach to identity politics which culminates in reflective solidarity. It was this attention to identity politics and Dean’s optimism about communication across differences that intrigued me as I thought about translating a philosophical commitment to educating for citizenship into practice.
My motivations for using Dean provide the framework for my concluding comments in this chapter. The issue of locations that foster or impede reflective solidarity is intricately connected to the dynamics of power and access that characterize those locations. Once we move Dean's more abstract discussion of discourse into the university, issues of access and power become even more immediate. Who are the faculty and students in the university? Do different participants have different legitimacy and/or authority? Do individuals who are not members of the university community have access to these conversations? How might the dynamics of the discussions change as the participants change? Any discussion of educating for citizenship has to acknowledge, if not respond to, these questions as participants repeatedly raised issues of power that are embedded in these questions. I argue that if Dean were to apply her model to a specific setting as I have done she would extend her analysis to address these very clear gaps.

These omissions do not negate the value of Dean's contributions, instead, they offer opportunities to interrogate how the particularities of the site of reflective solidarity will demand different responses by those responsible for supporting this communicative model of citizenship. In the case of the university, the caretakers of this process are the critical and feminist educators, students and administrators that are willing and able to engage in the process.

The third issue, the inattention to substance, is also deeply connected to the site of the discourse as different informal and formal expectations exist depending on the social institutions one examines. The university setting implies that students are all adults that have reached a certain level of development and that there are mechanisms of redress in disputes regarding treatment by those who have authority. As a microcosm of society,
the university is characterized by the oppressive and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours that exist in broader society. Attention must be paid to how these forces shape the nature of discussions on all topics and the space that is allotted for particular positions. The issue of content brings together all of the opportunities and impediments embedded in Dean's reflective solidarity and provides a context to frame my discussion of reflective accountability. I pick up on these issues as I draw parallels to Petrovic's (1998, 1999) response to homophobia and heterosexism in the elementary and secondary school classroom. Before I move to this discussion, I want to provide a brief retrospective on the development of my dissertation.

In many ways my dissertation reflects the journey that I have taken through the literature on educating for citizenship and my engagement with the participants' insights. As with any journey, perhaps I haven't always taken a direct route; however, I believe there were no wrong turns, only unplanned detours that enriched the overall experience.

This final chapter represents a culmination of my argument regarding the applicability of reflective solidarity as opposed to a more traditional summary. My discussion of the possibilities of reflective solidarity has been conducted within the walls of the university and it was important to provide some historical and contemporary context for the debates that are occurring regarding the purposes of higher education. My examination (in Chapter 4) of some of the characteristics of the university regarding corporatization, the primacy of research, and the solitary nature of the teaching enterprise was meant to lay the framework for my more specific discussion of progressive pedagogical practices undertaken within these parameters.

I explored the different dynamics of the relationships in the teaching and learning
enterprise as educators reflected on their own power and authority, their role as a learner, and the injection of their personal lives in their classrooms. This discussion was important as I examined the potential of a solidarity that “requires that we be willing to take a stand, that we open ourselves up to risk and realize that only insofar as we make claims and take stands can we connect with those with whom we might disagree” (Dean, 1996, p. 179).

This emphasis on relationships with the Other across our differences necessitated an examination of the specific dynamics of these relationships. In this effort, I explored issues that revolved around pluralism, silence and resistance. In pluralistic approaches to education, there are always opportunities for inclusion; however, there are also risks associated with relativism, ranking of oppressions, claims of authority through experience and voice, struggles for space and acceptance, and the inclusion of oppressive and discriminatory speech.

The extended discussion of voice (in Chapter 6) highlighted the fact that reflective solidarity, like so many other perspectives on discourse, does not pay enough attention to silence in all of its manifestations and with all of its motivations. My examination of silence explored the dynamics of silencing as: (a) power, (b) a strategy to maintain harmony, (c) a consequence of marginalization, and (d) a communicative response. Reflective solidarity appears to be grounded in verbal exchanges that bind people together in their agreements and dissention. This reliance on and celebration of speech does not adequately address the responsibilities individuals have to one another in these exchanges and the positive and oppressive dimensions of silence.

My exploration of voice and silence framed my discussion of resistance, safety
and risk. I discussed resistance by exploring various sources and forms of resistance and institutionalized responses to resistance. I contend that Dean’s concept of reflective solidarity would be enriched by a greater appreciation of resistance as a reality of critical discussion and as a legitimate and productive response to some points of view.

Dean (1996) contends that reflective solidarity necessitates that “rather than basing the strength of our association on our common experiences of pain and oppression, or tradition and affection, it anchors it in our ability to recognize each other as mysterious, inviolate, and worthy of respect, a recognition that allows us to assert and contest the claims each raises as we attempt to come to understanding” (p. 177).

I argue that there are three critical themes that are embedded in the communicative model put forward by Dean. The foundational assertion regarding solidarity is grounded in assumptions regarding understanding, voice and respectful exchange. Clearly these concepts are interdependent and have been raised in a variety of ways in previous chapters. My goal in this chapter is to try to bring together the threads of each of these themes to demonstrate how the exploration of these concepts has been constructed in my dissertation. It is through this examination that I build on Dean’s work to emphasize a rethinking of the importance and dimensions of accountability.

My discussion of resistance, safety and risk highlights the tremendous opportunities of, and potential obstacles to, educating for citizenship in a meaningful and proactive manner. Using reflective solidarity as a core value necessitates the type of risk-taking that I have explored in this dissertation. Reflective solidarity emphasizes communication as the mechanism to achieve understanding that facilitates solidarity. I argue that there are risks inherent in the goal of understanding that need to be
acknowledged. In recognizing those risks I suggest a focus that supports this goal but stresses accountability differently and to a greater extent than Dean does in her discussion of reflective solidarity.

I want to begin by exploring the activities of listening and understanding and how these dynamics support a more complex and varied approach to our responsibility to one another in the face of conflicting points of view.

**Listening and Understanding: Unpacking These Educational Imperatives**

Dean (1996) emphasizes the responsibility that all citizens have to engage in the type of discourse she describes. She believes that the goal of understanding is both achievable and desirable:

The presuppositions of argumentation are not hard-and-fast rules per se. Rather, they express formally our appreciation of the difference between persuading another by monopolizing the conversation, interrupting, belittling or ignoring the other’s experience (conversational tactics familiar to many women and members of oppressed groups) and coming to a shared understanding by really listening and considering the views expressed by the other. When these rules of argumentation hold, in principle the participants will be able to reach a consensus on the validity of a norm on the basis of good reasons—that is, because the norm is in everyone’s interest rather than reflecting the dominance of a few. The idea, then, is that only through hearing the interests of each individual can we reach an agreement regarding the general concerns of all of us. (pp. 154-155)

My critique of the goal of understanding as it is characterized in Dean’s political construct of reflective solidarity is particularly important given that, perhaps unlike other settings, understanding is one of the pillars upon which our educational systems, at all levels, is built. In this section I want to talk about the goal of understanding as a prelude to my concluding argument that focuses on a multi-layered concept of accountability that builds on the potential of reflective solidarity in an educational setting.

Inherent in Dean’s discussion of understanding is the role of critical listening.
While it would be reasonable to assume that listening is embedded in the speech that characterizes most university classrooms, it is difficult to deny the claims of scholars such as Bickford (1996) that listening has been severely undervalued in academe’s discussion of classroom activities and often the evaluation of those activities. This tension is critical to educating for citizenship and is explored further in my discussion of accountability. Ellsworth (1997) challenges “the possibility and desirability of a reflective, ‘full understanding’ between teacher and student” and argues that

Education, whether critical or traditional, is inundated by discourses and practices that assume the possibility (and desirability) of a dual, reflective relation between student and teacher. They assume the possibility of using language to mirror, for example, the teacher’s meaning, intent, knowledge (be it already achieved or in the process of being constructed). They assume the possibility of then using that mirror of language or curriculum to “show” the teacher’s knowledge to the student, which the student can then “see,” and “understand,” and reflect back in measurable ways. (p. 78)

Discussions of listening and silence that I had with participants made me realize that I, like the majority of educators, did not recognize these critical aspects of classroom dynamics as purposeful and not necessarily incongruent with engagement with the course material.

The second component of Ellsworth’s (1997) critique revolves around the desirability of this emphasis on understanding. Kumashiro (2000) echoes this critique as he argues that

Critical pedagogy needs to move away from saying that students need this/my critical perspective since such an approach merely replaces one (socially hegemonic) framework for seeing the world with another (academically hegemonic) one. Rather than aim for understanding of some critical perspective, anti-oppressive pedagogy should aim for effect by having students engage with relevant aspects of critical theory and extend its terms of analysis to their own lives, but then critique it for what it overlooks or for what it forecloses, what it says and makes possible as well as what it leaves unsaid and unthinkable. (p. 39)
Kumashiro’s comments seem to me to challenge the lack of accountability in the goal of understanding. Instead, a pedagogical approach that decentres understanding provides room for a greater emphasis on accountability whereby everyone is responsible for considering the lens through which a position is taken as opposed to simply examining the position itself.

*Respectful Exchange in the Face of Oppressive Voices*

Both Dean and Habermas rely on communicative dynamics that are characterized by respectful exchange; however, I contend that there are points of view expressed in conversations that prevent this type of discourse. The example that my participants emphasized again and again revolved around sexuality. I suggest that it is very difficult to maintain an open and respectful dialogue if one party (or possibly more than one party) is making derogatory comments about the identity of others. In the example of sexual orientation it becomes very interesting because it is often not a case of simple name-calling; instead, the remarks are part of the argument. When someone calls gay men or lesbians immoral, they are grounding their disapproval or disdain in a conception of the good life that they are likely prepared to defend and their defense is supported by legal and social sanctions that support their bigotry.

My question is how do educators and students respond to these types of comments in a context of openness, multiple subjectivities, coming together across difference, and respectful exchange. My tentative answer to this question is that we expand the pool of options available in contentious teaching moments by embracing the multidimensional meanings of accountability and responding in ways that acknowledge that in any given moment, we need to evaluate to whom we have the greatest responsibilities.
Obviously, these are difficult assessments to make and they vary by the course, topic, context of the comment, and the audience. However, I believe there are some lessons to be learned from Dean’s attention to the situated, hypothetical third and her commitment to a communicative ideal and from educational theorists such as Petrovic (1998, 1999, 2002) who have wrestled with some of the practical implications of these approaches to difficult teaching moments regarding sexual orientation. It is to this discussion I would like to turn with the goal of explicating my idea of reflective accountability.

Reflective Accountability: The Ultimate Goal of Citizenship Education

I have tried to examine the applicability of reflective solidarity in the university in the face of deeply held belief systems, in particular attitudes towards homosexuality. Specifically, I wanted to expand on Dean’s discussion of accountability to argue that in some cases being accountable to ourselves and others means not standing in solidarity with those who challenge basic values of equality, dignity and safety. This is not easy territory, as I have already discussed at length the dilemmas presented by differing points of view on all of these principles. However, as I indicated in the introduction, I think Petrovic’s (1999) exploration of moral democratic stands (MDS) and moralistic stands (MS) offers a framework within which educators at all levels of the system can think more creatively and proactively about educating for citizenship in some of these more difficult moments.

Petrovic’s (1998, 1999, 2002) work is situated in teacher education and the challenges and opportunities that arise in these programs and subsequently what responsibilities graduates (and schools) have as they interact with their students and
communities. In his discussion of exploring the issue of sexual orientation in the classroom, Petrovic (1999) argues that

A useful distinction here is one made by Fay and Gordon (1989); they distinguish between moral and moralistic. The former means "living by the higher moral code one espouses, as well as not infringing on the rights of others"; the latter "involves the intent to impose one's own moral code on others" (p. 211). Moral stands, in continuing this distinction, should be based on principles of democracy. Thus, they are moral *democratic* stands (MDS). Moralistic stands (MS), depending on their extent and the contexts in which they are taken, are undemocratic. (p. 201)

In his examination of what a moral democratic stand looks like in practice, Petrovic refers to Friend's discussion of the responsibilities of educators and administrators as they make curricular choices regarding sexuality noting that

Systematic exclusion is "the process whereby positive role models, messages, and images about gay, lesbian, and bisexual people are publicly silenced in schools" (Friend, p. 212). The silent message here is that heterosexuality is the only acceptable identity. The message becomes particularly insidious when this sort of systematic exclusion is paired with the systematic inclusion of homosexuality "only as a pathology, only in regard to sexual behaviour and/or framed as dangerous" (Friend, p. 215). (cited in Petrovic, 1999, pp. 202-203)

Petrovic (1999) contends that there may be a point at which teachers may be able to present a moralistic stand when students are old enough and better able to engage in debate. Although Petrovic outlines some things that must be in place for these moralistic views regarding homosexuality to be expressed, such as efforts to prevent violence, I disagree with this aspect of his argument. My disagreement has less to do with his assertions about the ability of the students to handle "it," than it has to do with the parallel to other oppressive points of view. I do not see how educators would make the same space for racist or sexist points of view that struck at the very essence of an individual's being. I am not talking about comments about immigration policy or language policy. I am talking about comments that reject the humanity and value of
someone from a particular race or ethnic background. I contend that educators silence these positions or are spared the need to intervene because the views tend not to be raised, as today in Canadian schools and universities there is a general climate of intolerance of racist remarks. There is seemingly a much more permissive context for similar remarks regarding sexual orientation and that reality neglects the accountability that we, as educators and citizens, have to one another through our difference.

I have extended Petrovic’s discussion of democratic education in two important ways. First, I believe the principles of recognition, non-oppression and the approach of positive systematic inclusion Petrovic uses to explore schooling and teacher education are instructive in university education in general. Second, Petrovic (2002) directs his argument regarding democratic education to teachers and administrators and not students, noting that “what should not be read into my position is that other students who make arguments against same-sex sexual orientation should be silenced. Nevertheless, their concerns can and should be handled within the notion of positive systematic inclusion” (p. 151). I extend Petrovic’s discussion of silencing as censoring to include the silencing that occurs when a contrary point of view is asserted by an educator. Petrovic argues that anti-gay statements made by students should be countered through positive systematic inclusion. While I wholeheartedly agree with Petrovic, he does not acknowledge how that approach serves to silence those students and positions that are homophobic. In fact, it is this type of silencing to which I refer later in the chapter.

I argue that postsecondary students should be held to a level of accountability that makes them similarly, though not equally, accountable for the dynamics and substance of classroom exchanges. Therefore, like Petrovic, my work focused on educators; however,
my discussion of reflective accountability relies on the assumption that students and teachers are both citizens and agents of change and need to be accountable for supporting democratic education.

I contend that the key limitation of reflective solidarity is the absence of any meaningful examination of the positive potential of silence. Dean (1996) argues that

In urging the contextuality, fallibility, and openness of discourse, I have offered an interpretation of discourse based on the diversity of the voices of those who enter and change it. This discourse, far from tending toward unity, allows for a non-violent plurality—open spaces for differences in which we can strive for recognition and understanding, this... critique prevents difference from making a difference; positing barriers to our communication, it allows us to remain complacent before those whom we have excluded, effectively silencing them. (p. 180)

Burbules and Rice (1991) make two important contributions to this discussion of understanding as a goal of discourse. First, they highlight the symbiotic relationship between understanding and misunderstanding arguing that “it is by the very process of ‘misunderstanding’ others—that is, interpreting their claims and beliefs in slightly different terms than they do themselves—that the process of communication actually moves forward to new understandings” (p. 409). The second contribution is the recognition that

Once one embarks in a dialogical exchange, various degrees of convergent or divergent understandings might result. These can be seen along a spectrum comprising: (a) agreement and consensus, identifying beliefs or values all parties can agree to; (b) not agreement, but a common understanding in which the parties do not agree, but establish common meanings in which to discuss their differences; (c) not a common understanding, but an understanding of differences in which the parties do not entirely bridge these differences, but through analogies of experience or other indirect translations can understand, at least in part, each other’s positions; (d) little understanding, but a respect across differences, in which the parties do not fully understand one another, but by each seeing that the other has a thoughtful, conscientious position, they can come to appreciate and respect even positions they disagree with; (e) irreconcilable and incommensurable difference. (p. 409)
I believe my dissertation illustrates some of the practical issues embedded in these two dimensions of understanding by examining principles of educating for citizenship, particularly in the context of homophobia and heterosexism. I think there are tremendous educational opportunities inherent in dialogic dilemmas of misunderstanding whereby individuals are forced to be introspective because of someone's different understanding or misunderstanding of their position. In terms of the continuum of understanding, my discussion of heterosexism and homophobia in the classroom demonstrates the inadequacy of a model, such as Burbules and Rice's (1991), grounded in varying levels of understanding, agreement and respect that characterize discussions across differences. Even their acknowledgment that one result might be "irreconcilable and incommensurable difference" does not recognize that the incompatibility of positions may be the result of the disengagement of one party due to the oppressive views of the other. This result is importantly different from two sides working toward but failing to achieve a more favourable result.

In his discussions of schooling, Petrovic (1999), drawing on the work of Young, notes that "teachers who find homosexuality repugnant, evil or sinful should be—and justly so—prohibited from expressing views to their students. Such censorship is a good start, but democracy demands still more. Teachers must actively promote recognition and non-oppression even when this requires presenting material that goes against their [moralistic stand]" (Young cited in Petrovic, p. 205). I would extend this analysis beyond the rather extreme descriptors that Petrovic provides in "repugnant, evil or sinful" and include representations of homosexuality as "abnormal" and "deviant" (in the moral, not the statistical, sense of the words). Educators have to stop hiding from the fact that most
anti-gay comments, no matter how they are justified, are based in fear and ignorance, and most of these comments are framed in judgment of the moral and intrinsic value of lesbians and gay men. Because of society’s general reluctance and the education system’s specific reluctance to critically engage with moral and/or religious beliefs on this issue, many educators and administrators have not adequately interrogated anti-gay comments as intolerant and oppressive and consequently have not responded appropriately.

In a specific example of anti-gay sentiment (acknowledging that there are many sources of prejudice against gay and lesbian individuals), Petrovic (1998) talks about the rights of fundamentalist Christians to express these views:

In the name of democracy, we might accept that given their moral code, they have a legitimate right to speak out against gay and lesbian sexual conduct. However, in order to maintain this legitimacy the pursuit of their morally defensible position must take a democratically defensible form. In other words, in the pursuit of their position no group or individual has the right to break the principle of nonoppression or to betray the virtue of recognition. . . . By actively avoiding the experiences of some of their students, teachers and schools betray these principles. . . . As the case of Michele demonstrates, teachers are free to maintain their own views. But, to the extent that these views silence or ignore other views, deter participation, reproduce prejudices among students, and hinder the processes of democratic education, teachers have an obligation not to express them in certain contexts. [emphasis in the original] (p. 53)

I propose that it is this type of critical and participatory reflection that is required as educators restrict the space for those whose views violate principles of recognition and non-oppression (Petrovic, 1998, 1999). Dean’s (1996) discussion of reflective solidarity provides an important framework to examine educational practices designed to promote citizenship; however, it needs to be supplemented by a discussion of accountability that facilitates the repudiation of some views. In other words, sometimes it is reasonable and desirable to reject comments that masquerade as dialogue but are not really aimed at
deepening understanding. Without this discursive option, the communicative dynamics of Dean’s reflective solidarity provide legitimation that aggravates the potential for harm.

So, what does transformative practice look like when it is grounded in reflective accountability? In order to begin to explore what reflective accountability, as a principle of educating for citizenship might look like, I want to provide an example of a teaching moment that I experienced and explore different options that might be available to an educator in a similar situation.

I was a guest lecturer in a second year social work class at the University College of the Fraser Valley, and we were exploring the topic of lesbian-led families. We had been talking for about 2.5 hours and in the last 10 minutes, a student raised her hand and made the following comment: “You seem like a nice enough person, but I feel compelled to tell you that your sexuality is deviant and immoral. And, your demand that I respect your rights seems hypocritical as you are not willing to respect me and my view of your lifestyle.”

Well, where to start was my first reaction—and then I looked at the clock. In her brief but pointed statement, this student had invoked some key aspects of reflective solidarity, in terms of respectful exchange of ideas across our differences, and at the same time had highlighted the consequences of the inattention to content and the limited options in the face of discriminatory comments available based on Dean’s model.

The fact that I was a guest lecturer and that the institution is situated in an area that has a substantial and vocal evangelical Christian population is important to understanding the context of this exchange. I would like to modify this actual encounter in a number of ways that will maintain this core tension but change my role and the time
available to respond. What if I were the instructor in the course and the comments were made much earlier in the discussion? I think it is helpful to maintain the subject matter and the community profile as they present a potentially more complex context that will enrich and extend my analysis. Another critical aspect of this example is the fact that I am an “out” lesbian and any response I offer would be viewed through that lens.

There are at least three pedagogical responses to this teaching moment. The first option would be to use the comments as an invitation to the class to engage with the student and her point of view. I would not immediately respond to her remark, instead I would ask the class if anyone had any comments or questions. My strategy would be to provide an open space for dialogue unrestricted by my challenge to her position. Given the nature of the topic, it is possible, maybe even likely, that students would be reluctant to jump into the conversation. In this case, it would be my responsibility to present some of the ideological, legal and political context from alternative points of view. The contributions of students and myself would be explored using a framework of pluralism and respectful exchange across our differences. Some of the advantages of this approach are: that the original speaker is not marginalized for her position, making it more likely that she will continue to engage in the class; that other like-minded individuals will be more likely to speak up on this and other issues; and, that students in the class will have an increased sense of safety as they engage in the course material.

The possible disadvantages of this method are that the speaker and other members of the class may adopt a more relativist lens as this viewpoint is perceived to be just one of many, that individuals who feel threatened or oppressed by this type of perspective may feel abandoned by me for not articulating my position, and that the student(s) who
hold this perspective are not challenged with the rigour that is appropriate. This approach does not respond adequately to the differential access to debate that occurs because some individuals are more comfortable articulating their points of view than others.

The second pedagogical option would be to shutdown the conversation by responding to the student that the comment was discriminatory and “out of respect for the class and the institution’s commitment to inclusion we aren’t going to explore your comments.” I would explain to the class that engaging with this type of oppressive discourse, even in a critical fashion, has the unintended consequence of reinforcing the message. The advantages of this approach are that my response signals to the class that comments or questions that do not embrace the course’s commitment to non-oppression will not be acknowledged in the class, and that students are pushed to critique the position that as long as people are talking about controversial issues that is a good thing.

The disadvantages of this approach are that the conversation is shut down before other students have the opportunity to refute or agree with the comments. It is likely that the student who made the comments and other students will limit their participation in the future and ground their withdrawal in their perception that I am intolerant of views that are different from my own. I am not convinced that any amount of dialogue would shift the ground of individuals who hold deep-seated prejudices; however, this second pedagogical approach precludes any opportunity for this to occur. Having said that, I believe there may be times when this type of forceful response might be valuable. It is difficult not to reflect on what impact this type of affirming response would have had on me as I struggled to see myself reflected as an undergraduate student.

The third option would be to respond to the student myself by noting how her
view is grounded in intolerance and contravenes the principles of recognition and non-oppression (that would have been introduced in the objectives of the course and embedded in the curriculum). I would then ask the class to think about how her comments oppose our more democratic and inclusive model for exchange and why there seems to be a general resistance to interrogating anti-gay positions and a specific accommodation of intolerance based on religious reasons. The disadvantage of this approach is that it focuses our attention on the student, which may make her and others less likely to engage with the class material in the future. The advantages of this approach are: it provides space for her peers who hold opposing views to engage with the roots of her comment; it sends a clear signal to the class that all members of the class are accountable to one another through our commitment to democratic inclusion of difference; and, it demonstrates that not all opinions that are to be equally valued and that as citizens we are obligated to make normative judgments based on principles such as recognition and non-oppression.

The first option is grounded in the assumptions about the power of discourse and desirability and achievability of understanding that Dean emphasizes in her concept of reflective solidarity. Dean’s brief attention to more contentious exchanges does not provide enough direction regarding these moments. Both the second and third options are characterized by the assertion of professorial power to silence and marginalize the perspective highlighted in my example. I believe the third option reflects the idea of reflective accountability and holds the greatest promise for educating for social justice in this context. Burbules and Rice’s (1991) discussion of these types of moments, notes that

While clearly dependent on tolerance of controversial and even inflammatory points of view, universities have begun struggling with the problem of how, given
the conflicts and prejudices of the broader society, the exercise of certain kinds of speech (for example, racial epithets) might actually restrict the freedom of others to feel secure enough to participate in the broader educational conversation. Such tensions illustrate the real social and political context in which specific educational choices need to be made; they set competing values and interests against one another, and there is no guarantee that the compromises made to further dialogue will or can serve all points of view equally. The practical choices here are rarely clear-cut, and more talking is not always the best thing. (pp. 410-411)

Discussions of homosexuality provide excellent examples of teaching moments that clarify my idea of reflective accountability, whereby accountability is understood as a multidimensional concept that is grounded in the specifics of the context within which the discourse occurs. Accountability needs to be practiced in ways that acknowledge citizens' responsibilities to ourselves, others who are marginalized, those who are privileged in certain contexts, and society at large. Our accountability may necessitate censoring or limiting expressions that are discriminatory or inflammatory. Dean's model of reflective solidarity provides the framework within which this accountability can be realized; however, her inattention to the substance of the discourse and the unequal access that characterizes the spheres within which these conversations are occurring does not promote a more flexible model of accountability. The idea of reflective accountability contextualizes educators' decision-making in a way that allows for the disengagement Burbules and Rice (1991) acknowledge in their analysis.

For critics who would continue to extol the virtues of speech, listening, understanding and reason in the face of anti-gay positions (Beck, 2001), I challenge the implicit and explicit contentions that: (a) discriminatory points of view must be provided a respectful audience, (b) the onus is on lesbians and gay men to understand that there might be rational roots to some individuals' anti-gay opinions, and (c) there might be
some reasonable grounds for prejudice against lesbians and gay men. Petrovic (2002) argues that according to this type of argument "racist teachers would be able to, in fact have the right to, claim to their students that black people are genetically and otherwise inferior to white people. After all, there are hundreds of years of 'reasoned' arguments to draw from, including those with an immense amount of data to support the claim" (p. 148).

Burbules and Rice (1991) explore a number of "communicative virtues" that include "tolerance, patience, respect for differences, a willingness to listen, the inclination to admit that one may be mistaken, the ability to reinterpret or translate one's own concerns in a way that makes them comprehensible to others, the self-imposition of restraint in order that others may 'have a turn' to speak, and the disposition to express one's self honestly and sincerely" (p. 411). While stressing the importance of these qualities in supporting constructive "dialogue across differences," Burbules and Rice (1991) qualify their discussion by recognizing the situational realities that contextualize these discussions. For example, "tolerance and patience may be virtuous when practiced by a teacher striving to understand and appreciate a student's perspective, but not so when invoked to protect racist or sexist speech that intimidates, harms, or silences others. Hence, these communicative qualities are best thought of as virtues or dispositions rather than rules, precisely because they need to be interpreted and applied thoughtfully to different situations" (pp. 411-412).

Reflective accountability stresses the contextual and relational dynamics of educating for social justice. It frames this dialogue by questioning the taken-for-grantedness of argument and understanding as positive in all educational contexts. As
educators, we are constantly making decisions that give voice to certain perspectives and silence others. Reflective solidarity and accountability raise questions about the dynamics of these decisions as we pursue our commitment to educating for social justice.

New Directions

As I complete my dissertation I am excited about the possibilities for future research that are rooted in this work. I want to discuss how I might address some of the issues that were not included in this study, and how this research has shaped the goals regarding my program of research for the foreseeable future. There are four lines of inquiry that frame my discussion of these two questions.

The first area relates back to some of the context issues I discussed in Chapter 4 surrounding the university as a site of educating for social justice. Throughout the writing of this dissertation I have struggled with how I, as an educator, engage with the pedagogical ideas and strategies I have explored. I have also wondered how this focus on classroom practice is shaped by administrative action and inaction. I intend to explore the institutional context of educating for social justice by conducting a series of case studies of educational organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to this type of practice. I have already begun one such best-practices case study, a profile of the District of Toronto School Board’s anti-homophobia, anti-heterosexism and sexual orientation policy. An examination of institutional best practices at the postsecondary level would be an extension of my work examining school district policy.

A key question that arises at the end of any major project is what might have been done differently. While I explored some of the limitations of my study in Chapter 2, there are two particular issues that were not addressed in my dissertation that I want to
explore in the future. What difference did it make that I asked educators about what they did rather than observe what they did? It did not make sense to incorporate observation into my original research design, as my goal was a three-way conversation among the participants, the literature and myself regarding educating for citizenship. This conversation emphasized how various stakeholders articulate their pedagogical commitments to educating for social justice. It was this sharing of ideas and stories that framed my analysis of reflective solidarity and led to my introduction of reflective accountability. I do not believe that observing classroom practice, particularly given that three of the participants were administrators, would have contributed to my original goal.

Having said this, I believe there is an exciting role for observing the practice of educators engaged in educating for social justice. For example, in reflecting on their practice in interview situations, a context removed in both time and place from their actual teaching, educators may not fully capture the complexity of what they are actually doing and saying in classrooms. They might welcome a like-minded and interested participant observer, as an aid to further reflection on their practices. I might, therefore, initiate a participatory action research project that moves my discussion of reflective accountability forward by collaborating with a small group of colleagues who share the pedagogical goals embedded in this concept. I envision three major components to this line of research. First, I would work over an extended period of time with a small group of like-minded colleagues to implement the principles of educating for citizenship which are found in reflective solidarity and reflective accountability. This collaboration would include regular group meetings to explore classroom experiences and strategies as well as opportunities to observe my colleagues in their classrooms. Second,
theme of context discussed above, our group would work to promote greater attention to the pragmatic discussion of educating for citizenship across our institutions. Third, this more focused discussion of reflective accountability would revolve around the idea of understanding that I discussed earlier in this chapter. As I highlighted, all of my participants discussed understanding as an aspect of educating for social justice—what I did not do is probe their definition of understanding and the strategies they use to promote this goal. Given the importance of understanding in Dean’s model of citizenship and my thinking about reflective accountability, I would make this exploration of understanding and listening central to my participatory action research project.

The third direction that I aim to pursue is the issue of homophobia and heterosexism as the last acceptable prejudice. My dissertation began as an examination of the philosophical and pedagogical practices of educators in the university as they promoted social justice. As I began my interviews it became clear that discussions of sexuality were the ground that participants found to be most illustrative of the challenges and opportunities they encountered in their classrooms.

As I indicated in Chapter 1, a discussion of education and sexuality was not part of my original proposal and I intend to examine the dynamics associated with educating for social justice that accompany discussions of homosexuality at any level of the education system. The overarching goal of this line of inquiry would be an exploration of the experiences of educators and students alike as they engage with material related to sexual identity. I want to examine subjects and courses that would be most likely to engage with topics of homophobia and heterosexism in an explicit way. I would pursue the work I have begun in the context of higher education; however, I am also looking
forward to exploring elementary and secondary school experiences. There is a great deal of evidence to indicate that it is critically important for gay and lesbian individuals and their families to see themselves in school curriculum (Chamberlain v. Surrey School District No. 36, 2002; Petrovic, 2002). I have used these references to schooling throughout my work on the university as the principles of non-oppression do not dissipate as students age. In his discussion of recognition, Taylor (cited in Petrovic, 2002) argues that

our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Non-recognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being. (p. 150)

It does not make sense to me that discriminatory comments made in a classroom are seen as evidence of pluralism and the realization of academic freedom, while those same comments would be cause for disciplinary action or dismissal in a workplace. I am not arguing that similar constraints be put on both sites of interaction; however, we need to pay greater attention to how the university, educators and students might be complicit in the intolerance experienced by lesbians and gay men through heterosexist and homophobic classroom practices, student contributions, and curricular decisions. While my dissertation illustrated that these contentious moments cut across a wide array of disciplines, it will be interesting to investigate how educators who engage in this material more explicitly and regularly might contribute to the conversation. I would use observation and where appropriate some de-briefing with students as important components of my methodology. Given the investment these educators have in this subject area I would also provide a thought-piece to which they could respond.
As I already indicated, a critical aspect of this research focus would be an in-depth examination of the classroom and institutional dynamics of these conversations in universities; however, I am also very interested in exploring how reflective accountability resonates in the elementary and secondary school system. Ultimately, I am interested in looking at the continuity of the themes of educating for social justice and the challenges presented by discussions of sexuality across all levels of formal education. I look forward to examining the implications of the level of education on the nature of the pedagogical approaches employed, the types of resistance experienced, the institutional supports and barriers encountered, and the involvement of various stakeholders.

This third research area is directly connected to the fourth direction of my program of research which is safer schools. I am currently involved in a number of safer school projects which are located within the elementary and secondary system and are directly related to my dissertation. All of the projects in some way emphasize describing "what is" and examining "what could be" through various administrative and pedagogical interventions aimed at creating a climate where social justice and activism are central. Not surprisingly, one of the issues embedded in the safe school literature and administrative responses to these issues is related to heterosexism and homophobia. My research highlights the persistent disconnection between the identification of homophobia and heterosexism as destructive forces in the playgrounds, hallways, classrooms and staff rooms of our schools and the implementation of strategies aimed at addressing these issues. It is this gap between problem recognition and practice that acted as the catalyst for my dissertation. The goal of my dissertation was to explore how educators described their commitment to educating for social justice.
I believe there has to be a revitalization of the idea of preparing citizens for a
democratic society and this necessitates that the education system’s role in this
preparation be more central to teaching and learning at all levels of education. In the
postsecondary system we need to have more critical discussion of our reliance on debate
and discourse that acknowledges there is differential access to these exchanges. While
educators need to embrace the spirit of exchange embodied in Dean’s reflective solidarity
there needs to be a concomitant acknowledgment that open debate of ideas might not
always be the most productive or responsible pedagogical path. Obviously, the exchange
of ideas is the foundation upon which education is built and so it is not without some
ambivalence that I have explored explicit and implicit silencing in the classroom. I have
come to the realization that historically the invisibility of certain topics in the curriculum
has silenced individuals and viewpoints including more positive representations of
homosexuality. I believe that this silencing was oppressive and was not based on the
principles of justice, recognition, and non-oppression that characterize reflective
accountability and my discussion of silence. The use of silencing, like so many other
pedagogical decisions is not formulaic or easy; however, I believe it is essential that
educators contemplate the possibilities of silence and voice based on these principles of
reflective accountability.
REFERENCE LIST


APPENDIX A

Original Contact Letter

June 22, 1999

Professor Susan Boyd
Faculty of Law
University of British Columbia
1822 East Mall
Vancouver, B.C.
V6T 1Z1

Dear Professor Boyd,

You have been identified as a person committed to providing an educational experience that encourages students to become socially and politically engaged in the world around them. As an educator and a learner I want to explore how the debate regarding the role of higher education can be reframed to promote a more constructive dialogue about pedagogical approaches that encourage this type of learning environment.

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate (through two interviews and a focus group) in my examination of pedagogical approaches that transform your philosophical commitment to educating for social and political change into classroom practice. In addition, I am very interested in examining the connection between these classroom practices and the development and maintenance of other forums for the critical exchange of ideas.

My research will be the foundation for my thesis entitled, "Educating for citizenship: Transforming theory into practice". This study will be conducted to fulfill, in part, the requirement for a Ph.D. in Educational Studies from the University of British Columbia. My research supervisor is Dr. Deirdre Kelly of the Department of Educational Studies.

I recognize that I am asking someone who, by the nature of your approach to learning, is incredibly busy as you integrate your classroom activities with various communities of learning; however, I hope that you will be interested in sharing your experiences with me and other educators as we contemplate the potential of these approaches for teaching and learning. I hope that you will agree to participate in what I anticipate will be an exciting exchange of ideas about our pedagogical practice.

...continued
I will explore the strategies used to translate this philosophical commitment into classroom practice. I recognize that we must be cautious in our acceptance of descriptions of practice; however, one of my primary objectives is to explore the nature of the discourses employed by educators who are describing their philosophical and practical commitment to consciousness-raising activities in the classroom. I will examine various formal and informal barriers that educators identify as obstacles that impede their pursuit of the goals inherent in educating for citizenship. I will examine the perceptions of educators regarding the development and maintenance of public and subaltern counter-publics in the university and the potential of the university to educate for social change.

I intend to explore these questions using three different approaches. First, I will be keeping a journal as I reflect on how my research is informing my pedagogical practices. Second, I will be conducting focused interviews with ten faculty members who have been identified through a snowball sampling technique. The pool of potential participants was developed to select individuals who are teaching in a university setting and who have shaped their curriculum and pedagogical choices in ways that support the concept of educating for citizenship. Third, I will be examining course materials from the participants and various policy and planning documents that have been produced by members of the university community. Participants will be asked to reflect on the role that these documents have played in shaping their teaching environment.

As a research participant you would be involved in two interviews lasting approximately one hour in length. You will be provided a copy of the transcript of each of our interviews for your review. After all of the interviews have been completed, you will be invited to a focus group session (two hours in length) that will encourage a discussion among all of the participants about the issues that were explored in the interviews. All of the interviews and the focus group will be audiotaped.

Interviews will be transcribed verbatim by a third party who has signed a confidentiality agreement. The research supervisor will have access to the transcripts with identifying information removed. Tape recordings and transcripts will be coded for identification and stored in a locked filing cabinet. Codes will be secured separately from the tapes and transcriptions will exclude or change identifying information. Excerpts from transcripts will be used in a manner that protects the identity of the subject, unless a participant indicates that she/he does not desire measures aimed at maintaining their anonymity.

You are free to withdraw from the project at any time and I will destroy any tape recordings and interview transcripts at your request.

If you are interested in the types of pedagogical practices that I have touched on in this letter and you would like to participate in this study, please sign this letter in the space provided:

...continued
APPENDIX C

Interview Framework for the First Interview

Interview: Areas to Cover

1. Describe your position/responsibilities at UBC (tenure, courses taught, involvement in institutes etc)

2. How do you describe your philosophy of teaching and learning? (i.e. educating for citizenship; empowering education)?
   • what are the goals of this approach?
   • how did you come to this approach?
     i.e. history/influences

3. How does philosophy/goals translate into practice?
   • teaching style
   • expectations of students in class
   • evaluation
   • curriculum
   • connections to communities

4. How would you evaluate the success of your approach?
   • have you been successful?
   • how do you define success?

5. How have you experienced support for your approach?
   • student
   • colleague
   • institutional (awards, policy documents)

6. Describe forms of resistance (overt/covert), if any, that you have experienced as a result of your pedagogical approach?

7. How has your pedagogy evolved over time in light of your experiences (support/resistance)?

8. Describe the University as a site for your practice.