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CRCRTH 630 Work-in-progress Presentation

“Stories We Tell Ourselves – and Each Other”

Background Perspectives

- Stories: what we tell is who we are; imagining best of ourselves
- Scaffolding: temporary, mutually supporting and pushing
- Learning and Creative Awareness: that learning comes from listening to ourselves tell the story - we are more than vessel - the story is the content filtered through the voice of the storyteller

Background Perspectives

- Learning: education and adults in the “liminal space”
- Stories as imagining or reimagining how we move through key periods or encounters in life (fictional twists on reality).

Guiding Question

- ◆ *What happens when we think of storytelling as a primarily collaborative act; where the relationship between the storyteller/s and the audience is regarded as the center of the process, and the learning that happens for them is regarded as the primary outcome?*

General Inspirations

- experiences with improvisational theater; improvisational storytelling techniques
- social therapeutics
 - Dialogue-centered
 - Speaking completes thinking
 - Meaning of “self”
- “The Wager” - Chekhov story
- “Courage Under Fire” - film

Issues Raised in Readings/Class

- Vygotsky and the ZPD
- The “W” as a story-writing or story-reading scaffold:
 - Points of transition
 - Two key aspects: crisis/conflict and then getting a handle on it (surface); deepening crisis and then realizing (deep nature) of issue; resolution of the story as having to deal with that
- Literature and film as natural sources of story (i.e. use of monologue/dialogue and voice)
- Stories as creative expression that expose how we think - provide basis for finding alternative paths - to not continuing along the previous lines
- Importance of context - seeing ourselves in various roles depending upon the context (hero, villain, supporting character)
- Stories as conveying messages across generations and different cultures
- Connecting individual experience to community

Principles and Practices

- Principles:

- When writing dialogue as part of a story, there is value in building this dialogue with others (not just by a single writer working in their private universe).
- The question of who owns a story is contextual; the teller, audience take on different kinds of responsibility in making-meaning.
- It can help to take the long view of learning from stories; learning can happen through a single, defined story, but it also happens as a process that involves a disposition to telling and listening to stories, and a will to listen carefully to one's own voice.

Principles and Practices

- Practices
 - Look for opportunities to engage with others around interpreting stories; don't assume that there is nothing to gain once I think I've "gotten it" when considering story meaning.
 - Plan my learning experiences by anticipating that the scaffold won't always be there; don't get too comfortable doing what is easy, and try new things as if I know the scaffold will be gone eventually. Mindfully and intentionally plan concrete actions without any dependence upon the scaffolds.

Toward the Written/Creative Product

- A collaborative dialogue that conveys the story of a shared experience between two or more people (or two contrasting voices of one person).
- A variation of a one-act play, but with emphasis on hearing the sound of the voice of each of the multiple participants.
- A way to review an experience and see meaning through social lens and let go of individual perspective as the “true” nature of the experience.
- Dialogue that plays with time, abstract and concrete elements; not necessarily linear recounting of actual events.

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