Constructing the Novel: Teacher Education

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For Elisabeth:

This text, this book, this narrative, this thesis—What name shall we give it?
We know that it is simply a glimpse of our never ending conversation.
# Table of Contents

**Introduction**  
- Acknowledgements  
- Rudolf Steiner  
- Leading Images  

**Section I  Beginnings**  
- Chapter 1 *One Story*  
- Chapter 2 *Writing Research*  

**Section II  Teacher Education, a novel excerpt**  
- Chapter 1 *Tin Soldiers*  
- Chapter 2 *Philly*  
- Chapter 3 *Dinner with Annie: the Castle of Wonders*  
- Chapter 3½ *Class Assignment*  
- A Chapter similar to Chapter 4 … *Returning to the novel*  

**Section III  The Novel Situation**  

**Section IV  Patriot Acts**  
- *The Novella*  

**References**


Introduction

Acknowledgements

I am glad that Rudolf Steiner University College has undertaken this project. The development of a truly international research based Masters Program embodying the pedagogical principles brought to the world by Rudolf Steiner has great potential and is an important task. Waldorf Education is often referred to as an approach that educates toward freedom. Freedom and the idea of “educating toward freedom” is a rather daunting undertaking. As we strive for this goal, it is necessary to evaluate our progress through rigorous self-reflection and ongoing research. How does our practice live up to our ideals and values? Are we educating towards freedom with responsibility? Are we meeting the needs of our times? Is it possible to share our knowledge with other educators? Are we able to take in and co-create with the ideas of others?

This Masters Program and the few others like it were surely initiated to explore these types of issues. A research agenda to prove the efficacy of our methods would not serve as well as one designed to discover what we are really doing and find the language with which to contribute to the larger educational research community. I am grateful to be part of the pioneer class; beginning this path of discovery with enthusiasm and honesty. Hopefully we have pushed and stretched some of the pre-conceived pictures for this program and helped to inaugurate a creative academic culture.

Personally, it has been both rewarding and challenging. I appreciate having the opportunity and space to go so intensely along this path of literary, artistic research into the mysteries of the written word. The “pedagogical province” element of the course enabled me to find and join with a large community of scholars involved with teaching writing in the university and college setting. Through joining the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), participation in the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in NYC Representing Identities, and connecting with the Progressive Educators, Working Class, Basic Writing, and Rhetoricians for Peace special interest groups, I have found support, encouragement and a growing sense of an emerging new identity – a progressive working class scholar.

Rudolf Steiner

It is both an honor and an intimidating task to attempt even this brief introduction to Rudolf Steiner and his ideas. His influence on our culture is wide ranging even as his name or accomplishments may not be recognized outside of a limited circle. He has influenced such diverse fields as education, farming, religion, medicine, bee keeping, disabilities studies, economics, banking, social work, political science, as well as artistic activities such as painting, drama, speech formation, architecture, sculpture, and a new form of movement, eurhythm. Based on his teachings, these initiatives continue to flourish and evolve. A unique aspect of Steiner’s teaching was his ability to respond to questions and perceived needs. He offered courses at the request of interested groups like the farmers, doctors, or priests. His courses always began with an overview of his Anthroposophical world view, a view of the evolution of the human being. These introductions were tailored for the specific group and served to connect the discipline with the cosmic picture, social context, and physical reality; acknowledging and describing the body, soul, and spirit nature of the human being.

Two aspects of Steiner’s teaching and choices are relevant for this paper. Much more is owed to the overall teaching. His influence permeates the entire project. This will perhaps become clear as the
paper progresses. Especially the three and four-fold picture of the human being describing the interplay of thinking, feeling and willing, and the influence of the ego, or the need to permeate activities with ego (in Steiner’s sense).

The first picture to be accented is Dr. Steiner’s conscious choice to move out of the traditional academic milieu of his time and take on the role of Spiritual Scientist and esoteric teacher or seer. Already in his early thirties, Steiner was recognized as an accomplished and rising scholar within the German scientific academic community. He was the editor of Goethe’s scientific writings as well as the works of Schopenhauer and Jean Paul. He was a prolific writer of scientific and literary essays and books prior to his publication of Theosophy in 1904. With this move he “overstepped the boundaries of accepted scientific thinking” (Holdrege, 1994) in effect sacrificing a prestigious social position in order to speak his own truth. The choice moved him into a position which challenged the status quo, leaving him open to personal attack and his teachings subject to anywhere from ridicule to skepticism. He continued to teach, lecture, write, and publish outside of mainstream academia initiating impulses in the areas mentioned above as well as others as the need was made known. He founded the Anthroposophical Society in 1912. The society functions today as a worldwide educational and social entity supporting initiatives based on Steiner’s teachings.

The second pertinent aspect has already been mentioned: Steiner offered his knowledge, his input—when he was asked. The request initiated a process of research and a total emersion in the task. He did not impose his ideas on those not seeking them. His advice could be taken up in complete freedom. The student was asked to allow the possibility for a “metamorphosis of his or her inner experience of ideas…” (Holdrege, 1994). Anthroposophical books and courses were designed in such a way as to be, “an awakener of the life of spirit... not a certain quantity of information imparted. ... it should be an experiencing with inner shocks, tensions, solutions” (Steiner, 1928 p.330).

These two aspects of Rudolf Steiner’s teaching practices have been placed side by side with purpose. I have said that they are relevant to the current study. Rudolf Steiner had a prodigious capacity to take in the philosophical and scientific ideas of his time and he was intensely interested in all that was moving and happening in contemporary life. It was his conviction that both this conventional scholarly knowledge and truths, as well as supersensible experiences founded on the study of spiritual science, was within reach of anyone earnestly seeking it. “There slumber in every human being faculties by means of which he can acquire for himself a knowledge of higher worlds” (Steiner, 1904 p. 1). For this latter pursuit of higher knowledge Steiner did not necessarily see academic learning or scientific training as a prerequisite or even an advantage.

However great the successes of science in understanding the sense perceptible reality may be, when it takes what is indeed necessary and beneficial in its own realm as the standard for all human knowledge, it creates a profusion of prejudices that block our access to higher realities (Steiner, 1904 p. 16).

In a lecture indicating the aspirations for spiritual science Steiner says:
We try to cultivate spiritual science in order to overcome materialism... We found communities of human beings within which there must be no dogmatic beliefs or any tendency to accept teaching simply because it emanates from one person or another... in which everything, without exception, must be built upon the soul's free assent to the teachings (Steiner, 1915/1979 p. 6).

Steiner’s depth of knowledge and intellectual capacity allowed him to place his knowledge into the stream of history and philosophy but he did not judge or rate his knowledge in reference to other views. He also encourages the development of thinking that is free from prejudice. He says in the lecture Cycle *The Inner Aspect of the Social Question*,

And how can I achieve it? The one and only way is this: instead of taking an interest merely in my own way of thinking, and what I consider right, I must develop a selfless interest in every opinion I encounter, however strongly I hold it to be mistaken (Steiner, 1974 p. 40).

His teachings indicate that there is no limit to what can be known. Individuals, through rigorous spiritual scientific investigation, active study, observation, and moral development may know and act in the world from inner authority and free choice. He promotes “ethical individualism” which is “communitarian rather than antisocial” (Reif-Hughes in Steiner, 1995).

Waldorf pedagogy spans the K-12 years with some experiments in adapting the methodology for adult education. Waldorf (Steiner) pedagogy is based on a model of human development, unfolding in seven year cycles. These cycles reflect what Steiner calls the process of the incarnating human being, the progressing embodiment of a spiritual ego presence—the entering into physicality—the alignment or integration of physical, spiritual, psycho/social/historical, and formative forces or bodies. The pedagogy combines a progression of curricular themes, teaching methods and processes, and social structures in an artistic manner which enhances the potential for educating toward freedom. That is, fostering the development of free and creative individuals—able to make responsible ethical choices based on a moral imagination which respects their own individuality in relation to community needs. Pedagogical principles are enacted by offering particular content in an artful manner within a social context and aesthetic milieu which supports the developmental needs of the student group as well as the individual student. Pictures of the evolution of consciousness and traditions of a meditative path of development underlie the practice.

The ambience of a Waldorf School is one of joy combined with industrious artistic activity. There is a rich cultural life and an awareness of the cycles of the year experienced through the celebration of festivals as well as a mindfulness to the daily weekly and monthly rhythms.

Anthroposophy is not taught in the schools in any direct way. Many teachers choose to study anthroposophy for their own personal and spiritual development. This is an individual choice; not mandated in any way.
Leading Images

Ways of Teaching:

“In the beginner’s mind there are many options. In the experts, there are few”  

“St. Augustine...in a conversation which made him the opponent of the Manichean Faust – voiced the opinion: ‘I would not accept the teachings of Christ, if they were not founded on the authority of the church.’ The Manichean Faust said, however: ‘You should not accept any teaching on authority; we only wish to accept a doctrine in freedom” (Steiner, 1904).

Image 1:

Ben Weatherstaff is a very good teacher. He may not even think of himself as a teacher. He is a gardener. He knows how to take care of the land, how to nurture and support the land so that flowers and vegetables can flourish. When the little girl came into his world, he was curious. Mary, thought that he was perhaps a little bit annoyed. She asked a lot of questions. She was used to adults being aloof, distant, or a little bit annoyed.

This is how Mr. Weatherstaff performs his task of teaching:

Ben is a gardener. He stands in his garden doing his work.  
A child enters his space. She is a rather awkward, unattractive child. He has been curious about her. He sees her. He recognizes her. He offers her an imagination. He suggests that his friend the robin is talking to her; hints that the robin may even “like” her.  
*There is a secret garden that the adults whisper about. They have forgotten where it is.*

Ben loves the secret garden. He helped create it. He takes care of all the gardens. Does it seem possible that he would forget where the gate to the secret garden is located?  
Ben does not tell the child about the garden. He only introduces her to the robin, listens to her, and answers her questions.  
*The robin points to the lost key and shows her the gate.*  
*The children enter the garden and begin to explore, work, and play.*

Ben climbs the wall. He can see into the realm of the children. He does not go over the wall. He enters through the gate when he is invited, in fact, commanded to come in by the children.

*He is an adult who bridges into the world of the children.*
In the garden, Ben looks at the children with a loving gaze, works side by side with them, engages in their play and fantasy, provides them with tools, protects their secret, and shares in their hopes and dreams.

When father comes to the threshold of the garden for his son, Ben quietly withdraws.

Ben Weatherstaff is a fictional gardener. He is a creation of Frances Hodgson Burnett in her novel The Secret Garden published in 1911. I have chosen to describe him as a “very good teacher” illustrating some of his behaviors and interpreting them as exemplary qualities for a teacher. Ben himself hints that he may be a teacher towards the end of the story. Colin is one of the children that come into the garden. He has lived as an invalid, learning about the world from books. Now, enlivened and enthusiastic we hear:

... Colin sometimes gave them Magic lectures.” I like to do it,” he explained, “because when I grow up and make great scientific discoveries I shall be obliged to lecture about them and so this is practice.”

Ben replies with his characteristic low key, tongue-in-cheek style of humor:

“Th’ best thing about lecturin’,” said Ben,” is that a chap can get up an’ say aught he pleases an’ no other chap can answer him back. I wouldn’t be agen’ lecturin’ a bit myself sometimes” (Burnett, 1911).

The Secret Garden is most often considered popular fiction. The introduction refers to the author as “commercial” and ascribes no deeper meanings to the novel. It has been popular with adolescent girls although it is widely read and enjoyed by a diverse range of people. On further scrutiny it is possible to find a rich array of cultural impulses that were active at the beginning of the 20th century. The novel is a unique example of a Bildungsroman with at least two protagonists being accompanied on an educational rite of passage, a boy and a girl.

Rudolf Steiner was emerging as a teacher and creator on several fronts during this same time period. He was a prolific lecturer. The school which initiated his new pedagogical approach known now as Waldorf education opened in Stuttgart in 1919. This quote from a lecture series given in 1921 called The Art of Lecturing has echoes of Mr. Weatherstaff’s comments above:

“When one approaches people as a lecturer, then one has to do chiefly with the workings of various instincts: The thinking which one kindles in oneself does not interest people, willing annoys them. Thus, if one were called upon for this or that act of will, we would find that we had called up, not his willing, but his annoyance. And if we were to sketch our most beautiful and ingenious ideas in a monologue before people, they would walk out. That must be the fundamental guiding line for the lecturer” (Steiner, 1921).

Steiner pedagogical principals support the incarnating human being. The gradually emerging self of the child is drawn and nurtured into the world. The first Waldorf School opened in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919. In the same year the Progressive Education Association was founded in the US.
We meet the Robin again. We are in the beginning, the first garden. It is naming day for the creatures of the earth. We first meet a “gentle” but stern God, something of a transition god figure – between old and new testament. He is giving distinguishing features and names to all of the animals. He calls a little gray bird Robin Redbreast. The bird is told that he must “earn” the red coloring for his breast. God does not tell him how to do this.

Robin takes up his destiny in earnest. He tries singing, love, fighting— all to no avail. Legends of robin lore are passed down with the same message living in the Robin soul for many generations, “He missed it, as all the others have missed it and even as you shall miss it.” There will be no Redbreast for Robin.

Time passes with the Robin soul in this resigned state until we come to a time in Jerusalem many cons after the creation. On this certain day God’s promise is fulfilled. Robin watches from his nest as the man is led to the top of Golgotha hill. Filled with compassion, he flies to the crucified Christ and pulls a thorn from his bleeding brow. A drop of blood from the forehead of the crucified one colors the Robin’s breast; fills his heart and fulfills his destiny. Robins to this day carry the emblem of this deed (Lagerlof, 1904).

Robin flies through time, announcing spring, new beginnings, new possibilities, with his love filled song. Carrying blood from the mind of God, the Word made flesh, the Logos in his heart. And we see him again in Frances Hodgson Burnett’s story leading the children back to the garden.

“We are stardust, we are golden, we are billion year old carbon-
and we’ve got to get ourselves –
back to the garden.”

*Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young*

Selma Lagerlof was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1909. In the presentation speech Mr. Claes Annerstedt praised her as a faithful daughter of Sweden and for her power in using “the mother tongue”.

“In the works of Selma Lagerlof we seem to recognize the purest and best features of our Great Swedish Mother…That is why she has succeeded in eliciting beautiful secrets from fairy tales, living folk legends, and saints' stories; secrets that had been hidden from the wordly-wise but which true simplicity perceives because, as the poet has the old grandmother say, it “has eyes to see the secrets of God” (Nobel Prize- presentation speech, 1909).

The above story called Robin Redbreast is found in Selma Lagerlof’s collection Christ Legends. This group of stories appeared in 1904 so they would have been within the body of work considered by the Nobel committee. The Noble prize was in its early years and the newly formed committee was intent on honoring the will of the benefactor as well as promoting wholesome societal values.
Journal entry… Robin’s voice—robin connecting heaven and earth—head and heart.
Writing toward Easter, wanting to discover if there are any “pedagogical notions” to be found in stories in the early 20th century, wanting to find a story that talked about a particular bird—a Robin, looking for women writers…
(personal journal, 2006).

Image 3:

You can see the first grade children singing, painting, and moving (Are they dancing?) in the classroom or outside exploring the country side with their teacher. They are learning to write. For many months, they imagine and try out primordial sounds and movements, they listen for the music of the spheres, they hear the angels talking and meet the invisible being behind each vowel and consonant. Slowly, they bring these magical beings down, into the space around them, into their feelings, into their bodies—feet, hands, movements and finally into their heads.

Willi Aepelli is a Waldorf teacher. In The Developing Child he eloquently describes how he led his group of students into the world of the written word. This is the way he describes the final stages of that process:

“In that way the long path, which so to speak led from heaven to earth, was covered. As I wrote the alphabet on the blackboard in white chalk for the first time, after the beauty of living color, I could not help but feel sad, even horrified, as I saw the white skeleton of letters. On what kind of downhill path had I led the children? You truly are quite a derelict, I said to myself. And to the children I said (silently, of course): I actually feel terribly sorry for you poor little things for being forced to write these letters like this, but that is how grown-ups write.
But the children soon cured me of these thoroughly unhealthy feelings. What do you think they did when they saw the slanted, bony letters on the blackboard? They began to laugh boisterously, for such writing seemed exceedingly funny to them” (Aeppli, 1986).

Willie Aepelli’s children may have laughed.

I cried.

… For all of us who were pushed out of the garden much sooner than we would have liked to have been.
Section I: Beginnings
Darest thou now, O Soul,
Walk out with me toward the Unknown Region,
Where neither ground is for the feet, nor any path to follow?

No map, there, nor guide,
Nor voice sounding, nor touch of human hand,
Nor face with blooming flesh, nor lips, nor eyes, are in that land.

I know it not, O Soul;
Nor dost thou...all is a blank before us;
All waits, undream'd of, in that region...that inaccessible land.

Till, when the ties loosen,
All but the ties eternal, Time and Space,
Nor darkness, gravitation, sense, nor any bounds, bound us.

Then we burst forth...we float,
In Time and Space, O Soul...prepared for them;
Equal, equipt at last...
(O joy! O fruit of all!) them to fulfill, O Soul.

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, 1900
I. One Story

I’m supposed to tell one story at a time, one story. Every writing class I ever heard of said the same thing. Take one story; follow it through, beginning, middle, end. I don’t do that, I never do. Behind the story I tell is the one I don’t. Behind the story you hear is the one I wish I could make you hear.

- Dorothy Allison, from Two or Three Things I Know for Sure

I am very good at writing beginnings; at least I like to write beginnings. This paper is a series of beginnings. Now, I place the final chapter here at the beginning. How will the thesis end now? I am not sure. That is one of the points. Commenting on the research process, Max van Manen expresses this point in this way

It is also helpful to be reminded that phenomenological inquiry-writing is based on the idea that no text is ever perfect, no interpretation is ever complete, no explication of meaning is ever final, no insight is beyond challenge. It behooves us to remain as attentive as possible to the ways that all of us experience the world and to the infinite variety of possible human experiences and possible explications of those experiences (van Manen, 2002).

Last Chapter

The Void, a Void, Void

Paul walked from the wings toward the stage, towards the podium. He may have been naked. He had on his best suit, a new Gerry Garcia tie. His shoes were well worn but clean and newly shined. He walked. The red clown nose caught the spotlight and reflected into the audience. He placed his notebook on the podium, turned standing next to and slightly in front of the solid oak speakers place and... took one step forward into the void.

He stood there—in the void.

Every voice inside of him told him to do something. Do something. You must do something. Please do something, now.

He stood there—in the void. He stood. He stayed there.

The voice of his father that he carried in his head did not say “Do something”.

The audience, the people in the audience sat for a long time in silence before they started to laugh.
Two images have haunted me throughout this project: the void, and the clown. The clown standing in the void, “being” in the void; standing in the void with others watching him (yes, him, for now anyway), meeting their gaze—watching, feeling, thinking, connecting but not moving, not receding from their gaze, not reacting but responding and meeting. This is not the over-the-top silly slapstick circus clown but “one’s own clown” (Lecoq, 2001 p.145) – vulnerable, exposed and innocent, “their naïveté and fragility” radiates, protected only by “the smallest mask in the world” the “red nose”. (ibid.) This is the capacity to stand as, “a cultural, historical, and unfinished being in the world, simultaneously conscious of my unfinishedness”(Freire, 1998 p.52). This is a picture of the human being in the process of becoming, awake and aware of their incompleteness, not desiring to be finished; a participant in the world, an actor meeting other actors capable of transforming themselves—of creating themselves—transforming the world. The “red nose” can symbolize this “unfinishedness”, this incompleteness. To be fully human is to be incomplete, aware of the incompleteness and in relationship to others, to other incomplete human beings.

The clown stands at the void – the place of possibility. This is not the abyss roiling with its fears, dragons, and unnamable dangers—the world of chaos. The void is the space of emptying out, letting go, of allowing the new, the unknown to enter in—the “here and now”. Is it possible to find this place? Is it possible to meet at the void with writing, while writing? Can the Writer and reader meet at the void? Is dialogue possible or desirable?

In this case is it possible for me to leave behind my fifty-four year old, white, heterosexual, American maleness and what ever other definers, or Discourses with a big D, identities and activities fashioned by the melding of language and “non-language stuff” (Gee, 1999), exposing all of my weaknesses and strengths, opinions and ideas, truths and fictions; like an open book so that we may meet while I hide behind merely the tiniest of red noses. What happens at the void? Who meets at the void?

Lecoq’s clown is “genuinely playing himself and not ‘playing the clown’”

… (T) he contract the clown has with his public is immediate; he comes to life by playing with the people who are looking at him. It is not possible to be a clown for an audience; you play with your audience. As the clown comes on the stage, he establishes contact with all the people making up his audience and their reactions influence his playing (Lecoq, 2001 p.147, italics in original).

The writer gazes at the white page, imagining the words that will begin to fill the space; imagining those who will read these words. Is he/she able to ‘play with’ the reader/audience? Or are the words written ‘for’ or toward an audience? These questions suggest that writing is relational. Kenneth Gergen chooses these words of Martin Buber for one of the epigraphs in his paper Writing as Relationship, “Primary words do not signify things but intimate relations.”(Buber in Gergen, date unknown) What sort of intimacy is possible between a reader and a writer? Is it possible for me to meet you? Again, Kenneth Gergen

…writing is fundamentally an action within a relationship; it is within relationship that writing gains its meaning and significance, and our manner of writing simultaneously invites certain forms of relationship while discouraging or suppressing others (Gergen, date unknown).
The questions which have guided this project since its inception have been:

How does the written word interact with the world? What is the relationship between reading and writing? How do writing style and form interact with, effect, or create social reality and relationships? What sorts of relationships are created by our forms of Social/ Human science writing? What are the movements and ideas in current academic writing circles?

The questions have been taken up by building a relationship with writing, by writing – developing a daily writing practice. This practice involved immersion in a variety of styles, genres, and approaches to the written word. Writing was followed by reflective activities: critical analysis of the text, process journaling to keep track of inner and outer challenges and opportunities, and re-writing. What themes occurred and recurred in the texts being produced? Did one style of writing flow easier than another? What audience did I have in mind with the differing styles? How have others dealt with similar issues? This implies extensive reading of the works of others as well as becoming a reader of my own text: inner and outer dialogue, conversation. One inner conversation developed between fiction and non-fiction writing. I imagined this as a dance between the styles but this journal entry suggests otherwise:

… The dance with, movement between… This reflects my struggle with the “form, the dance, and dance is the aesthetic, the wished for metaphor. Wrestling in the mud, fighting, battling, or arguing begins to get closer to the real metaphor the real inner sense. What about Content? Do certain themes need particular forms? Is content important? Are ideas important? Is meaning derived from form, content, style, or media type? What is called for in the particular “situation”?!! … In this situation? (journal entry Feb. 2006)

I found that I was working with, writing about the same themes in all genres. The boundaries between the styles became blurred: fictional narrative, diary entries, analysis and interpretation, theoretical speculation and extrapolations timidly did start a kind of dance. At first this was awkward, polite, often stumbling, “Sorry, I don’t mean to step on your toes. Who is leading, anyway? Are we allowed to dance this way?” The decision to develop this dance of genres and writing styles has resulted in the paper you are now reading. I am playing with the idea that fiction can be used as academic research. I have been experimenting by writing fiction in response to pedagogical concerns, reading the fictional texts and interpreting them through educational, sociopolitical, and economic lenses. I have established a way of writing that is described as creative analytic practices (CAP) in the qualitative research literature, (Richardson, 2005) or as a “fourth genre” in the Composition, Rhetoric, and English writing pedagogy community. Fourth genre texts are located on a series of intersecting lines connecting the poles of the personal and public, the diary and the report, the informal and formal, the marginalia and the academic article, the imaginative and the expository... (Steinberg in Brein, 2001 p.3).
What kind of relationship does this choice make possible? How can mutuality, understanding, and trust be established? What needs to be done in order for the text to be understood in the way that the writer would like it to be understood? Is this possible? The author can make an effort to be transparent, convey an honest straightforward interest, clearly state intentions, or indicate how words or rhetorical forms are being used. One helpful intervention may be to unveil or make transparent the writing process including offering a glimpse into the self-reflective personal elements and exposing the difficulties and failures as well as the successful attempts encountered along the way, as this description of the “critical researcher” indicates, author/researchers need to be:

... self conscious in the sense that researchers try to become more aware of the ideological imperatives, and epistemological presuppositions that inform their research as well as their own subjective, intersubjective, and normative reference claims (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005 p.305).

Political motivations, stances, questions, ideologies, D/discourses (Gec, 1999) will be explicitly exposed, discussed, and highlighted. There will be some issues that remain implicit or hidden from the author. Readers may find subjacent agendas or certain themes may become figural for them based on their preference, theoretical perspective, psychological makeup, gender, or social position. This list can go on much further. One agenda behind Constructing the Novel: Teacher Education is to allow space for co-creation, dialogue, epiphanies, disagreements, or transformation of ideas. This “agenda” attributes particular qualities to writing. Co-creation and dialogue especially indicate a sense of writing as relationship.

Second, there is possibility for engaging on the levels of thinking, feeling and willing. This reveals writing as an activity. Multiple perspectives can be explored; anger, joy or sadness may be aroused; and social action may be initiated through involvement with the text. “Performative writing takes as its goal to dwell within multiple perspectives, to celebrate an interplay of voices, to privilege dialogue over monologue” (Pelias, 2005). When Sartre explores the question “What is Writing?” one of his concerns is, “What change do you want to bring into the world by this disclosure?” He comments, “The committed writer knows that words are action”(Sartre, 1946).

A third, motivation for writing has been to problematize a prevailing scientific or academic writing paradigm or cultural preference. This was not with the purpose of destroying, mocking, or annihilating (Friere, 2000), but in order to come to some understanding of the parameters of and power relationships within the paradigm. To problematize is being used in this way: to problem pose, to question, to place into critique, to take something that is familiar and defamiliarize it to complicate it. Words, concepts, and ideas often take on a “given” quality, “of course we all know what that means or why we believe or act in that way”. How are the words used? Who uses them and for what purpose? Patriotism, scientific writing, academic writing, and teacher are a few of the words that will be defamiliarized, problematized, or complicated in this paper.
Is this science? Is this research?

These were some of the voices or questions that resounded within the academic culture; the “situation” (Clarke, 2005) from which the project emanates:

“*It moved me, but it's not science.*” I wondered, “Can science be passionate?” And, “Does this mean writing is a science?” “What initiates scientific exploration?”

“What would happen if science as we know it completely disappeared?” I thought that science was about creativity and renewal. I have not heard anyone espousing an end to science.

“Traditional academic or truly academic writing” There are many traditions and truths.

“A Scientific paper” Does this mean objective, experiment related, statistically relevant? I remembered this voice, “Given to science, was the belief that its words were objective, precise, unambiguous, and nonmetaphorical” (Richardson, 2005 p.960).

“Pedagogical Science” My professional experience and adult education understood “pedagogy as art”.

The implied rules, structures, values, and conventions were not immediately apparent. Was there a “correct” way to write a scientific paper? Who dictates the correct way? Is pedagogy “science” or “art”?

Over time disciplines and professional groups develop accepted ways to communicate within the established community. Some of the terms used to describe the phenomenon have been discourse communities (Miller in Gee, 1999), discourses (Foucault, 1969), or communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991). There are benefits as well as shortcomings associated with this phenomenon. Some of the benefits are mutual understanding, establishing evaluation criteria, and delineation of shared values or beliefs. On the downside can be difficulty sharing knowledge with those outside the group, elitism, “power plays” and ostracizing within the group, or stagnation of ideas. I offer my text into a newly forming discourse community, to a group of scholars interested in an expanded view of science and education based on the teachings of Rudolf Steiner. There is no homogenized or standardized research method or representational genre. The intellectual pursuits of the practitioners cross many disciplines. My aim is to expand the dialogue to engage with a broader range of individuals and groups. We have not established the “norm” for our community of researchers. What parameters will we create: for research methodologies, styles of presentation and representation, acceptable beliefs, values or behavior? Will they be rigid and dogmatic or ‘anything goes’? How will these decisions be made? Will they be implicit or explicitly documented? Will we lean toward the artistic or the scientific? Can we create something unique? Will others define these issues for us? As I write all of these ‘who are we’ questions I ask, “Is it really necessary to create this ‘we’? Already, this implies a ‘they’ an ‘other’ setting the scene for the long tradition of ‘us versus them’ battling.
Non-adversarial Rhetoric

Is there a kind of violence at work in intellectual debates and discussions; in the university colloquium, seminar, or classroom; in academic texts? Is there something implicit in our very ways of us relating ourselves to each other in academic life in present times that makes us fear each other? Is there something in our current circumstances that makes us (or at least some of us) anxious about owning certain of our own words, or taking a stand? Speaking from my own experience, I think there is (Shotter in Gergen, no date available).

The original plan was to write a novel as educational research accompanied by a shorter “theoretical” paper “defending” the concept. That is, arguing for acceptance of fiction as a form for presenting academic research. There is precedence within academia, particularly in the discipline of Education, for writing fiction as viable research. Boundary Bay (Dunlop, 1999) and Balancing Acts: a Novel (Sellito, 1991) are two examples of novels which have been accepted as doctoral dissertations in a Canadian and an American university respectively. The debate has died down in the English speaking community as new forms of representation have moved out of the realm of the experimental and into more mainstream acceptance (Richardson, 2005). The latest edition of The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research places the ‘Crisis of Representation’ at the end of the 1980’s and marks 1995-2000 as a time of ‘post experimental enquiry’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

The final version of this thesis incorporates the creation of fiction and describes the struggle intrinsic to attempting to play between the two styles of writing: creative artistic writing, in this case fiction —wanting to write freely, following intuition and imagination, evoking feelings as well as ideas and action, leaving loose ends and opportunity for misinterpretation and co-creation with the reader, telling a story; and academic writing—with its rule bound structure driven emphasis, logical sequencing, impersonal voice, and ideas of censorship and hierarchical evaluation. I am not arguing per se for the acceptance of so called creative writing over scientific writing. I was searching for and present fiction that engenders questions. The aim of academic writing or traditional academic writing often seems to be to give answers. What is the research Question? How well do you answer the question? These are the binaries that emerged during the writing process. I recognize that there is much “crossover” in the qualities attributed to the different types of writing. Fiction needs some recognized form just as scientific papers exhibit creativity and passion toward the discoveries reported.

Is it possible to offer a text into academic discourse without arguing; not setting out to prove a point? I mused as I continued to read and write on the subject:

In another arena, perhaps if I was being told to be vaccinated against a “threatening” disease, I could refuse due to “religious convictions or beliefs”. (Although there are now rather binding laws for vaccination if you want to attend publicly funded educational institutions or have certain jobs) It is still possible although difficult to resist participation in military service out of objections based on conscience. One’s “patriotism” or love of country or care for fellow man is called into question when you make this kind of statement. I would like to present my thesis, my ideas in a non-adversarial form of rhetoric. Kenneth Gergen (1997), and John Stotter (1997) among others, discuss the hostile environment and attitude often present in academic discourse. Peter Elbow (2005) and Doug Brent (1992)
investigate the possibility of a non-adversarial rhetoric or “nonrefutational argument” style. David Cooperider (1987) and Steve DeShazer (1994) both utilize non-problem solving methods in their work. Carl Rogers’ (1961) “person centered” therapy has been adapted by some rhetoricians and composition theorists. (Reflective journal, citations added).

This offered some encouragement. Although this is my goal, natural tendencies toward argument and proof are difficult to leave behind. Military metaphors, the righteousness of religious fervor, and questions of patriotic duty permeate the musings for a more peaceful, non-violent way.

I don’t plan to join the debate; although I acknowledge that there has been a debate within educational research around this topic. The questions: what is fiction, what is non-fiction, what constitutes an academic/theoretical paper appear to be non-issues for the most part in this time, particularly within the qualitative research community. Paradigm clashes keep the argument alive as suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) when they describe a “methodological backlash associated with the evidenced based social movement” (p.3). The argument “my paradigm is better than your paradigm” seems futile. A professional is free to choose a path of discovery and way of being in the world; an ethical act of moral imagination (Steiner, 1995).

When I wrote these words in my journal, I considered them to be an ironic tirade. Now, I want to share them to illustrate my bias or ‘choice’. They no longer sound ironic in my ears, just straightforward and simple:

In the end, the debate will go on… Some will agree that a novel can serve as a thesis for educational action research; some will disagree. Some will stick to old beliefs, some find new options, some find new reasons to agree or disagree. Certain factions could assert their power, their position to: approve, disapprove, grade, judge, find lacking, or praise. Some could say “I don’t understand”—that would be a good thing—some would say that it is not good. (journal 2007)

…and thousand people in the street, singing songs and carrying signs, mostly say “hurray for our side”, nobody’s right if everybody’s wrong, Stop children what’s that sound everybody look what’s goin’ down (Stills, 1969).

In order to meet at the void, ‘nose to nose’ an attitude of openness without loosing critical awareness is called for; something akin to these words:

Gadamer concedes that we cannot read or approach a text except, necessarily, in terms of our own knowledge, preconceptions, and ‘horizon’; but we must also assume, as a first principle, that the text may well not be reducible to that horizon, and that it may pose a challenge to it. It is the patient, self-suspicious discipline of submitting oneself to this possibility that helps distinguish and sift out these preconceptions of readers which merely remake the text in their own image, from those that enable it to emerge in its singularity. The way for readers to challenge their assumptions as they approach the text—whether to refine, confirm, or refute them—is to open themselves out to a conversation with thinking from other situations and times. (Clark, 2006)
There is a diversity spanning disciplines, time and culture of those who move freely between genres. I want to mention a few instances that suggest the normalization of the notion that there is a rich palette available to academic writers.

Starting here, where I sit now writing this text, we have Ludvig Holberg, most famous for his plays and comic verse. He was born in Bergen; there is a statue of him in a prominent part of town. The Norwegian government created a Memorial Fund in his name in 2003. The fund, 200 million NOK is administered by the University of Bergen. There are many cultural and educational initiatives around the fund but the most visible is the annual awarding of the Holberg Prize.

We find these statements about Holberg the man and scholar, presented in matter-of-fact tone on the university web-site dedicated to the Prize:

... Holberg was a highly prolific author, both of fiction and non-fiction. It is difficult to draw a sharp distinction between the two genres and it is not a distinction Holberg himself drew.

It was the university and academic studies that were Ludvig Holberg's first interest. His literary career started while he was in an academic environment. Critical academic debate made Holberg aware of his talent for ridicule, as his satirical contributions and responses to criticism often led to general amusement.

... Eighteenth-century academia was not as fragmented into different disciplines as it is today. Nonetheless, it must be said that Holberg's scientific work was highly interdisciplinary in its approach. His academic work involved extensive book learning, but his observation of different peoples and cultural differences in the course of his various journeys was also an important element in his approach to different subjects. Through his interdisciplinary and internationally oriented efforts, Holberg endeavored to modernize subjects and teaching methods at the university of that period. He was a representative of his time - the Age of the Enlightenment. His thinking appears rational and enlightened, but his arguments were always rooted in everyday experiences. Holberg did not much care for theoretical constructions intended solely as intellectual amusement or as a means of self-assertion. It was precisely this approach that made him one of the most widely read authors of his day.

So, in his honor and in the tradition of his academic ideals the Prize has been awarded for these last three years to:

... scholars who have made outstanding, internationally recognized contributions to research in the arts and humanities, social science, law or theology, either within one of these fields or through interdisciplinary work. Through his/her scholarly work, the prizewinner must have had a decisive influence on international research in the field, for instance through the development of new theory, knowledge or insight, through making new use of existing theories or through the methods used. (holbergprisen.no, 2006, italics added):
The first recipient of this award was Julia Kristeva. In an interview discussing the publication of her novel, The Samurai, she expresses a similar attitude toward genre and academic discourse. I was recently reading the manuscripts of Proust's notebooks, and I came across a question he asks in one of his drafts: "Should I make this into a novel or into a philosophical study?" People have always wondered if they should treat a subject that interests them through theory or through fiction. Is there really a choice to be made? Must we prefer one form of discourse to the other? If we think of more recent writers, we realize that Being and Nothingness did not prevent Sartre from writing Nausea. And Merleau-Ponty, who was less committed than Sartre or perhaps committed in a different way, planned to write a novel although he never did so.

The imaginary could be understood to be the deep structure of concepts along with their underlying systems. The core of the symbolic lies in the fundamental drives of the signifier, that is, in sensations, perceptions, and emotions. When we translate them, we leave the realm of ideas and enter the world of fiction, which is why I sought to describe the emotional lives of intellectuals (Kristeva in Gubermann, 1996).

With this, I am not claiming that Julia Kristeva advocates the dissolution of boundaries or a blending of genres. I am also not advocating dissolution or annihilation. I am exploring the idea of movement between, a dance or weaving metaphor. This thesis is offered as a step in that direction. Kristeva does say that one has the choice about how to investigate and write on a subject. She has chosen several times to write fiction which explores her intellectual interests. She is known to push and challenge limits. Roland Barthes (1986) says this:

“Julia Kristeva changes the place of things: she always destroys the last prejudice, the one you thought you could be reassured by, could take pride in; what she displaces is the already said, the deja-dit, i.e.- the instance of the signified, i.e., stupidity; what she subverts is authority – the authority of the monologic science, of filiation. (Barthes in Graham, 2000 p. 31 italics in original)

On a personal note, reading and striving to understand Kristeva’s work has been rejuvenating during moments of doubt and struggle throughout this project.

Rudolf Steiner and Goethe wrote plays, poetry, and religious verse as well as scientific dissertations and essays. I am not familiar with Ibsen’s non-artistic writing but in Norway his dramas appear to be taken as social theoretical documentation. These qualities of fourth genre literature aptly describe the authors that have been mentioned:

… The most pronounced of these are personal presence and voice, self-discovery and self-exploration, veracity, flexibility of form, and (the skillful use of) literary language (Steinberg in Brien, 2001).

… (The) writers share a common desire to speak in a singular voice as active participants in their own experience (ibid.).
The novel Teacher Education, the thesis, Constructing the Novel: Teacher Education and Patriot Acts, the novella, are written in the spirit of discovery, searching for a way, if not, the correct way—striving to come close to this picture, writing that:

…enacts the death of the ‘we’ that we think we are before we begin to write. A statement of allegiance to the radicality of unknowing who we are becoming, this writing pushes against the ideology of knowledge as a progressive movement forever approaching a completed end-point (Phelan, 1997 p.17).

Writers choosing these expanded forms have multiple options for exploring their themes. The full spectrum of literary interventions is available in order to approach the subject from varying aspects or points of view. It is possible to speak in several different voices. Readers are left free to evolve their own picture and different types of readers may be engaged. A goal is to place the themes and concerns into a literary narrative environment and invite them to ‘play’ together in a multi-voiced dialogue. The story may provide a venue for a wide audience, both in and outside of academia to become actively engaged with relevant issues.

The writing style integrates personal self reflective narrative, academic discourse, and metaphor, with popular and fictional sources on equal footing with the scholarly. The words, the form in which the words are presented, the ‘voice’ employed and the context of the reading and writing coalesce to create, indicate, or initiate ‘meaning and significance’. I am presenting this hybrid writing form as an academic thesis.

In The Void, a Void, Void, which began this chapter, the protagonist stands poised ready to give the final graduation address to his peers, family, and teachers. He stands consciously at the edge of the void, ready to move into his future taking his past and the present with him. The father voice inside of him is quiet.

… There is laughter… joy… fear… courage …and……wonder.

A short review of the chapter – One Story

A friendly and positively biased reader experiences this text as a Russian doll or an onion with many layers and surprises. I am partial to the Russian doll metaphor because of its simple beauty, childlike qualities of wonder and mystery, usually rich color, and the fact that the doll does not tend to make one cry.

Perhaps it would be helpful to indicate some of the layers or stories within the story by introducing some of the voices that have been heard in the chapter so far. Their disciplines may vary widely, however they have this in common: they are writers and authors. I have met all of them initially through academic discourse, and metaphor, with points of view. It is possible to speak in several different voices. Readers are left free to evolve their own picture and different types of readers may be engaged. A goal is to place the themes and concerns into a literary narrative environment and invite them to ‘play’ together in a multi-voiced dialogue. The story may provide a venue for a wide audience, both in and outside of academia to become actively engaged with relevant issues.

First we meet Dorothy Allison, a novelist, activist, “feminist, working-class storyteller” who introduces the first metaphor, which is telling the story (D. Allison, public proceedings March 23rd, 2007). Max van Manen, pedagogical/phenomenological researcher, teacher, points us towards the realm of infinite possibility and we come to the void in a fictional excerpt by Roy Ford, teacher, therapist, and student. Lecoq, an artist, teacher, and performer brings drama to the fore and elaborates on the clown and the mask as tools for becoming more fully human. Paolo Freire, critical
pedagogue, teacher, corroborates the idea of becoming and places value or being unfinished or incomplete. Discourse is mentioned with reference to James Gee, sociolinguist and professor of reading. Kenneth Gergen, a Social Constructionist introduces Martin Buber who is sometimes called an existentialist theologian and sometimes a storyteller. Their theme is relationship, writing as relationship in this case. Paul, a fictional protagonist is cited in several places suggesting that fictional realities also contain their own truth. The Performance studies discipline, represented by Ron Pelias and Peggy Phelan, joins forces with existentialist philosophy in the person of Jean Paul Sartre to indicate writing as activity, socially engaged activity. I have not forgotten Julia Kristeva or Laurel Richardson. We will hear more from them in the chapters that follow.

II. Writing Research

The phenomenologist seeks to be a writer, and as writer he or she seeks to enter the space of the text where one tries to gain a view of or to touch the subject one is trying to describe. Seeking to be a writer. But what does that mean? What does phenomenology ask of the person who wants to practice it? I do not mean to speak of the technology of writing. The act of writing is difficult and fraught with frustrations. In fact, no writer becomes successful in seeking to be a writer. What makes writing successful is to search for the meaning that motivates one to be a writer/researcher in the first place (van Manen, 2002).

At its heart, this is a writing project…

I have wanted to write for most of my life. I have written bits and pieces—poems and story fragments found in stacks of crumbling boxes, fading ink on half filled yellow pads, marble composition books, or poorly typed on an old Underwood. Years of progress notes, brochures, biographies for applications, beginnings of novels, many alternative degree plans, course descriptions, project outlines, short articles, grocery lists, or endless ‘to-do’ lists scribbled barely legible or professionally printed buried together: my personal Archeology. I brought this unfinished business into graduate study, a desire to deepen and develop a writing practice and to be in fruitful and stimulating dialogue with other people and ideas. I was not looking for necessarily like-minded people or only ideas that fit into my world view but hoped to find a group interested in and willing to engage around issues that were mutually important and socially and politically relevant.

I started out to write a novel as educational action research. The novel, Teacher Education, will be in process or in progress for at least another year. It takes longer to write a novel, a first novel than one might imagine. It lives and grows, shifts and transforms, stalls and then speeds along. George Orwell, at the end of his essay called Why I Write describes his experience:

\begin{quote}
Writing a book is a horrible, exhausting struggle, like a long bout of some painful illness. One would never undertake such a thing if one were not driven on by some demon whom one can neither resist or understand (Orwell, 1931/2004 p.10).
\end{quote}

He is talking about motivations for writing in this essay. Why would a writer subject himself to this struggle? What passion keeps the dream or project alive and moving along? Orwell names four motives for writing: sheer egoism, aesthetic enthusiasm, historical impulse, and political purpose. (p. 4-5) Along with him, I experience these motivating factors and endeavor to discern which leads the
way and when. Orwell felt that his writing was most effective and alive when he allowed political purpose to fuel his endeavor. The impulse towards engaged political discourse is the demon that drives the current project, political purpose and a love for the word. My picture is more like birthing or metamorphosis rather than an illness. There are exhilarating, life affirming moments along with those of struggle and pain.

Pursuing the ‘demon’: Seeking allies on the path

...this is what “motivates me to write in the first place” (van Manen, 2002.)

Harry Truman, president of the United States at the end of WWII, told the American people that we had “unleashed the Basic power of the universe” onto the enemy, Japan. He is talking about dropping the first Atom Bomb over Hiroshima on August 6 1945, a bomb with a name: Little Boy. You will hear him say these words in the chapter called Tim Soldiers, claiming that the bomb was dropped on a “military” target. In his words the “Basic power of the universe” is a scientific wonder, the harnessing of the power of the atom by men who worked together to achieve a common aim – a “Weapon of Mass Destruction”. The description closest to my worldview describes the “Basic power” with these phrases, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God…” The Word is seen as the source from which all life emanates. Two quite different interpretations of “basic power of the universe”: creation and destruction. The meeting of creative and destructive forces is frequently depicted as the necessary Yin/yang principle, the balance of opposites. When these spiritual struggles manifest into material reality without benefit of a mediating third element war oppression and power struggles of many descriptions result. Shiva and Brahma need Vishnu; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; creation, destruction, and preservation. Rudolf Steiner places this struggle as the central mission of humanity. His hand-carved wooden statue The Representative of Man portrays the human being standing upright mediating between the heavenly and earthly forces, chaos and order, light and dark.

These worldviews are difficult to reconcile. The dissonance created is the political demon driving this project. Who wrote those words for Mr. Truman? Why was the bomb dropped? What message do the American people hear in those words? What feelings are engendered? Can a combination of authoritarian rhetoric, media coverage, and military carnival bury the truth of what was done? What message do school children born into this environment receive? We are the land of the free, the home of the brave, the land of opportunity… words, texts, images, money have the power to create and destroy, to construct or tear down, to hide as well as to make clear. “You should be Proud to be an American, America protector of democracy, freedom and justice. And please forget about the murder and destruction in our past.” The dark side is buried deep into the collective psyche. And the answer is ‘Yes’ authoritarian rhetoric, mass media manipulation, and military theater is capable of manufacturing cultural values and beliefs. Individuals must carry knowledge of the truth somewhere in their soul. What happens to a person or a culture when this wound goes untreated, unnamed?

War is Peace
Freedom is Slavery
Ignorance is Strength

1984, George Orwell
A paragraph from the first major paper written for the masters course will help set the scene. We were asked to write about “My Epistemology” – How do “I” know the world? I begin to know the world here:

This essay begins in 1950’s, east coast America. This was a time of change: post-war, post-bomb, “baby-boomers” time. “Science” was the new king in the home and factory. Folk wisdom and common sense were being chalked off as “old wives’ tales”, not to be taken seriously in this emerging modern world. Television and advertising proclaimed, “Better living through Chemistry”. Doctor’s insisted that Similac, a “scientifically formulated” baby drink, was better for children than mother’s milk. It is a striking fact that most of the scientists and doctors promoting these ideas were men (Ford).

The Scientific world view was taking a strong hold on American society in this post war era. Truman’s speech may be seen as a kind of manifesto, a declaration…

This is where I begin to hear rumblings beginning from certain reading delegations. Perhaps I could call them the science crowd, those looking for an objective passive voice—the voice of an observer commenting on facts and empirical evidence. I could now offer comments from reliable sources perhaps a scientist, physicist David Bohm (2004) who calls into question the possibility of the completely objective observer; or a philosopher or two who observe how difficult it is to see the world in new or novel ways, outside of one’s preconceived world picture (Foucault, 1969, Gadamer, 1989). Would these comments serve as evidence? What constitutes ‘authority’?

Perhaps I can take the “parody” approach as in this fictional abstract from Teacher Education:

There are many precedents for what I am trying to do. I can and will elaborate on several sides of the issue. I will prove beyond the shadow of a doubt (cliché day) that what I am presenting is valid, authentic, verifiable, and academically rigorous. I will cite famous experts who say that this is rubbish. One of these experts developed a theory of “multiple intelligences”. Some other famous experts say that this is rubbish. These experts often create standardized tests geared toward one particular type of intelligence. For now, they miss the important marketing point: if they accepted the new concept they could make up tests for all kinds of intelligence, even ones not yet part of the rival theory. The economic potential is enormous.

After exposing the fallacies and absurdities of the so-called logical positivistic paradigm, I will roll out the experts from diverse and impeccable academic sources who espouse, substantiate, and otherwise glorify (may be a bit too strong!) my point of view. The reader will no longer have doubt in my premise. My verbal/rhetorical skills coupled with sound research practice, eminently citable sources, and a matter-of-fact voice will enable the reader to move on with an openness to the new and innovative ideas that are sure to follow (Journal, novel 2006).

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1 A.I. DuPont- Chemical Co. - slogan.
2 From unpublished conversations with Ann M. Ford- Mother.
For the sake of clarity, we could establish a schema to identify tone of voice or veiled meaning. Green could indicate irony, purple parody, of course red for anger, and so forth. Difficulties arise for those whose printer only accommodates black and white. What color should this paragraph be printed in? Swales advocates the use of ‘play’ elements, like parody to “relax the grip of academic conventions” (Swales, 2004 p.249).

… (Parodies) are neither ‘accommodationist’ response to the need to abide by academic conventions nor an ‘escapist’ retreat into fiction and imagination. This is because parodies are subversive in the way they take norms and conventions to extremes and so expose them for what they are (Ibid. p.251).

**Constructing the Novel**

Is it possible to construct the “novel” as the title for this thesis suggests? How can an individual sort through all of the inner and outer bombardment and create something new, original? We begin to tread into metaphysical questions here, much debated ground. I don’t play very well in this arena. I miss the point somehow. I, of course, don’t have an answer or the answer. I am not looking for an answer but I am writing. I search for allies, someone to join forces with (a military metaphor, odd how the military metaphor emerges now)…

*I am looking for support, someone to say that what I am doing is normal and acceptable, maybe even someone who prefers this kind of writing,, writing that allows the writer’s voice, my voice to mingle with the voice of other writers, to play with words to find out what words are capable of, what I can do with them…*

Out of the qualitative research literature emerged this answer to my inner question:

> “Nurturing our own voices releases the censorious hold of “science writing” on our consciousness as well as the arrogance it fosters in our psyche; writing is validated as a method of research” (Richardson p.962).

Laurel Richardson may be the person who coined the phrase *writing as a method of Inquiry* although Max van Manen is another candidate. She has advanced this concept in progressing chapters of the Handbook of Qualitative research, starting with the first edition (1994) and in the 3rd addition (2005) claiming “CAP ethnographies are not experimental; they are in and of themselves, valid and desirable representations of the social .” CAP ethnographies are produced through “creative and analytical practices”. The notion that these qualitative writing or representation styles have moved from experimental status into the realm of general acceptable practice is supported by sifting through the handbook. Richardson sees indications of a paradigm shift in this list of “species” culled from the forty-four chapters ranging from theoretical methods to practical application:

> …auto-ethnography, fiction, poetry, drama, readers’ theater, writing stories, aphorisms, layered texts, conversations, epistles, polyvocal texts, comedy, satire, allegory, visual texts, hyper texts, museum displays, choreographed findings, and performance pieces… (Richardson, 2005 p.962).

This list is not exhaustive. Further examination of the handbook indicates active ongoing development of research approaches and utilization of a wide variety of representational forms. A
A rich body of literature has evolved around each of these methods. A short description of some of them may be of interest here:

*Testimonio* (Beverly, 2005) takes personal passionate statements and recounting of events as data and representation of research. It is historical analysis in the first person, a research of personal witness.—*Critical ethnography* (Madison, 2005) is the performance of the personal, the social story using street theater, poetry and music. *Narrative Inquiry* is a term used to describe a variety of methods and approaches “all revolving around biographical particulars narrated by the one who lives them.”(Chase, 2005 p.651) This is a large and growing field reaching into many realms of life, therapy and research. Life stories and oral histories are two of the more familiar practices.

The general tenor of these articles portrays research and writing research as a multifaceted entity with “scientific” research representing one means among many other equally efficacious approaches. Product, process and context are individualized and congruent.

CAP ethnographies or “fourth genre” texts cross borders and blur genres, and therefore resist being defined as either science or art. They are artistic and scientific. This may engender some difficulty in times when evaluating or assessment becomes necessary. There is no heuristic or template available. Max van Manen’s words which begin this chapter may prove helpful with this dilemma, “as writer he or she seeks to enter the space of the text where one tries to gain a view of or to touch the subject one is trying to describe” (van Manen, 2002). How well has the writer gained a view of or touched on the subject?

Laurel Richardson has developed four criteria or standards which may prove helpful when reviewing social science presented as a creative analytic text:

1. **Substantive contribution**: Does this piece contribute to our understanding of social life? Does the writer demonstrate a deeply grounded (if embedded) social scientific perspective? Does this piece seem ‘true’ - a credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the ‘real’?

2. **Aesthetic Merit**: Rather than reducing standards, another standard is added. Does this piece succeed aesthetically? Does the use of creative analytical practices open up the text and invite interpretive responses? Is the text artistically shaped, satisfying, complex, and not boring?

3. **Reflexivity**: How has the author’s subjectivity been both a producer and a product of this text? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgments about the point of view? Does the author hold himself or herself accountable to the standards of knowing and telling of the people he or she has studied?

4. **Impact**: Does this piece affect me emotionally or intellectually? Does it generate new questions or move me to write? Does it move me to try new research practices or move me to action? (Richardson, 2005 p.964)

In a personal communication Bo Dahlin suggests an additional point for the area 3- reflexivity:

Does the work lead up to new questions? That is, not answers to questions raised at the start but the formulation of questions not previously put, at least not by the author and maybe not by the reader… (B. Dahlin, personal communication, May 3rd, 2007).
I would like for this thesis to be considered within this framework. These are the values out of which it has been created. I set out to create a piece of work that could function on many levels and engage a wide audience. I wanted to have a product that could be useful in education. **Constructing the Novel: Teacher Education** is that product. It is the *One Story* when taken as an entity, a single text. It contains other stories and texts. The novel in progress, *Teacher Education* is another story. *Patriot Acts*, the novella can also be read on its own. The introduction, acknowledgements, leading images, and even the references carry other stories. All serve the larger whole.

My thinking has been that perhaps some people are unaware of the movements and possibilities for artistic expression, community involvement, or political activity within academia. Then, this paper may serve as an introduction to a few of those possibilities. Once again, abolishment of more traditional approaches such as argumentative discourse, case studies, quantitative analysis is not being advocated. Recognition of a non-hierarchical arena with all approaches being valued and evaluated for the contributions they offer in their unique context is being promoted. This could be said like this, “science will not be judged by artistic standards and art will not be scientifically evaluated.” The different approaches can serve and complement each other.

Novelist, Carole Maso expresses aspirations in this direction for her fiction and echoes the evaluation criteria offered above:

> I want something else. I want there to be space enough for all sorts of accidents of beauty, revelations, kindnesses, small surprises. A space that encourages new identity constructions for the reader as well as the writer. New patterns of thought and ways of perceiving. New visions of world, renewed hope” (Maso in Kuebler 2000).

**At its heart, this is a political project…**

We want a social science that is committed up front to social justice, equity, non-violence, peace, and universal human rights. We do not want a social science that says it can address these issues if it wants to. For us this is no longer an option (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005 p.13).

I enjoy overtly political art, I like to listen to it and watch it, I find the ways it succeeds and the ways it fails fascinating; I always learn something, and frequently the lessons are exhilarating. Work that wears its politics proudly energizes me. Work that speaks clearly, intelligently, with sophistication about a social issue, political problem or history; work that speaks in a voice I haven’t heard, about things I haven’t experienced; work by an artist who thinks its important to point out injustice and oppression—this sort of work teaches me, entertains me, rejoins me with the community I most want to belong to, the part of human society that’s politically progressive and actively engaged in making change (Kushner, 2001).
The two epigraphs which head this section point to a possible union between social science and art. Denzin and Lincoln are central voices in the social science arena. Tony Kushner is an activist playwright most famous for his play *Angels in America* which takes on large societal themes while exploring intimate personal relationships. There is a sense of urgency and value placed on becoming engaged in political activity.

Once again, Paul the fictional protagonist expresses this urging in an early draft of chapter two:

He seemed to be avoiding it. There was, is, Irene (Sarah Ruth) and summer but it was the world that held him back. He was wallowing in his own mind and interests while war raged in every part of the globe. People were killing each other and he sat and wrote and thought and daydreamed…

Israel had “accepted” a “Cease Fire” agreement for something like the third time this week. Each time violating it, which meant bombing which actually meant killing soldiers and civilians which means people—babies, grandmothers, sons, fathers, girls and boys, doctors, janitors, reporters; which means ending dreams, plans, happiness, hellos, goodbyes, conversation, futures in general. There seemed to be some very deep and acceptable reason why this behavior was justified and possibly sanctioned by the forces of “Good”. Condoleezza Rice and George W. were effervescent in their support and praise with long winded promises of more and bigger retribution if the enemy did not change their ways. Paul knew that making these lists and thinking so sarcastically were not helpful, but he did not know what to do. He was angry, afraid and felt helpless. What could he do? He was soon to join with the “grown-ups”. He could sort of put it off by going to graduate school and perhaps a post-graduate fellowship… (Teacher Education, early draft)

... *Darfur, Iraq, Somalia, and New Orleans. Global warming, gene manipulated food …*

What can I do? What can be done? What can *I* do? ... as a teacher, a writer, a person, a citizen. What is possible? These are questions of agency. Is it possible for an individual to influence “the way things are”? With whom should I unite? The qualitative research community recognizes social justice and engaged political activity as a central mandate for the social scientist. The Rhetoricians for Peace work actively using writing and the fostering of literacy skills to encourage students to political consciousness and activity.

**Answer to personal dilemma:** Unite with the community of politically engaged artists, social scientists, and teachers.
Finding a Place - Basic Writing

Social, political, psychological factors meet in the process of writing; teaching and learning to write. It has been noted that “political purpose and a love for the word” is the passion behind this project. What political activity am I engaged in? What do I want to do with my writing? Where do I choose to place my creative energy? What do I want my writing to do? This path of discovery has led me to Basic Writing and Critical literacy as a promising direction for my work.

For the newly developing adult reader/writer whether they are second language learners or native speakers learning to read and write in the accepted way carries deep psychological and socio-cultural implications. The “Basic writing” class is a place where issues around discourse, voice, dialogue, and love for the word meet. Social, political, economic, educational/pedagogical, and spiritual realities are enacted concretely and immediately in this setting. Basic writing is the name frequently used for adult literacy classes in the US. Learners come to this educational setting with a wealth of experience and vast array of goals and aspirations:

Imagine that you are an adult student:

You have signed up for or have been “assigned” to a “basic writing” course at the local Community College. If you have been “assigned”, there could be several reasons. You may have done poorly on a standardized test. You may have submitted a writing sample and received a notice that it would be necessary for you to take a remedial class before being allowed to take part in the program that you have chosen. English may not be your first language. You probably have many ideas about why you have been assigned to the class. Something about your writing is “not good enough”. If you have self-selected, you believe or have been told that your writing ability is not up to a certain standard. In either case, a sequence of writing courses usually with numbers like 001, 030 (no credit) stands between you and your goal.

Listen to Ira Shor:

We are what we say and do. The way we speak and are spoken to help shape us into the people we become. Through words and other actions, we build ourselves in a world that is building us. That world addresses us to produce the different identities we carry forward in life: men are addressed differently than are women, people of color differently than whites, elite students differently than those from working families. Yet, though language is fateful in teaching us what kind of people to become and what kind of society to make, discourse is not destiny. We can redefine ourselves and remake society, if we choose, through alternative rhetoric and dissident projects. This is where critical literacy begins, for questioning power relations, discourses, and identities in a world not yet finished, just, or humane. Critical literacy thus challenges the status quo in an effort to discover alternative paths for self and social development. This kind of literacy--words rethinking worlds, self dissenting in society--connects the political and the personal, the public and the private, the global and the local, the economic and the pedagogical, for rethinking our lives and for promoting justice in place of inequity. (Shor, 1999, emphasis added)

Now, imagine that you are the Teacher:
You have at least a Masters degree, probably in English. This means that you have gone through certain Rites of passage and completed prescribed requirements which included: a fair amount of writing, presented in a particular acceptable way, a lot of reading and passing a series of standardized tests like the GRE (Graduate Record Exam) or teacher certification exams. You may be younger than many of your students and come from a different social, economic, language, or ethnic community. What leading images do you carry into the setting? How do you view your role? Do you have a prescribed curriculum that you will present? Do you have a planned reading list? How will you begin? Will you “front load” (Shor) academic discourse and language or student discourse?

The above scenario presents a learner who enters the situation already in a somewhat marginalized position. The potential for power imbalances can be readily recognized. Teaching reading and writing become sites of political activity. Whose voice is the voice of authority? Whose language is “acceptable”? How will the languages and voices that individuals bring into the classroom — languages that are spoken, loved, well known, hard earned, inherited or created be honored. Will students be told to leave those voices “at the door”? Will the message be, “Now you must assimilate and accommodate to the official language if you are to achieve your goals”? Side by side teaching, a pedagogical approach where the political conflict, and power imbalances, are acknowledged and worked with up front is called for in the basic writing classroom.

The children in Willi Aepelli’s class (see leading image) were given the possibility to remember the secrets, the mystery behind the letters. They may be able to use the magic—have power over the words—to be friends with the word—to be able to create with the word not be ruled and directed by it. They write the words, and then read the words that they have written. They are the experts, the writers, the authors. Is it possible to take some of the approaches and attitudes intrinsic to Waldorf education into the adult literacy or basic writing classroom? Can adults be offered the opportunity to remember the ‘angels’ behind the letters and words? Can they be supported to write and speak with power? Can one be part of the “great conversation” without speaking, or without writing “the king’s English”? Whose conversation is it anyway? How does the teacher need to be in this situation? What skills and attitudes and values are called for?

**Political Activity**

There is an approach to pedagogical practice which speaks accurately to the themes and concerns introduced above. They are the same issues which are being artistically explored in the novel **Teacher Education**. The protagonist who has been chosen to carry, explore or research power imbalances, identity development and social agency is a young man about to graduate from the university. His story provides the vehicle for investigating these themes from a variety of engaging perspectives. The novella **Patriot Acts** (Section VI) approaches the subject from another point of view, through the eyes of an eighty year-old man who is faced with a dilemma which challenges his long standing world view. The novella is written with the emerging adult reader in mind.

The educational approach is most often called **Critical Pedagogy** although other names are often associated: radical, revolutionary, libratory, or transformational pedagogy, student-centered teaching, and progressive education. Striving for a Critical Literacy is the hallmark of the teaching practice:

... literacy is understood as social action through language use that develops us as agents inside a larger culture, while critical literacy is understood as ‘learning to read and write as part of the process of becoming conscious of one’s experience as historically constructed within specific power relations’ (Shor, 1999 and Anderson and Irvine, 1993 in Shor).
Peter McLaren is one of the outspoken proponents of Critical pedagogy. In the course description for *Critical Theory in Education: Power, Politics, and Liberation* a core course in the PhD. in Urban Schooling program at U.C.L.A. he acknowledges that schools are “major political sites of culture struggle”. Before moving on to other issues the course analyses “the argument that education is a political activity”, and

focuses on the US educational system as an integral part of a diverse and conflictual society and how school administration, teaching, the curriculum, and policy shape our understanding and reproduction of, as well as our resistance to, such a society (McClaren, 2007).

The novel *Teacher Education* investigates this social-historical construction and exposes and places in dialogue aspects of the power structures.

On first glance, it appears to be a scathing criticism of the democratic, neo-liberal capitalist way of life. There is a direct confrontation with “the way things are”—the status quo. The “story”, however, provides a vehicle to move from a criticism emanating despair toward a hope initiated critique. The protagonist, Paul, is a young man in the final year of his teacher education, or “formation” as Paolo Freire (1970, 2000) names the process of developing the role of educator. He is striving to maintain a critical consciousness as he graduates and moves out into the world. This is a consciousness which maintains a “receptivity to the new without rejection of the old because it is old” (Heaney, 1995) He is seeking a “Pedagogy of Hope” (Freire, 1995, Giroux, 2003, hooks,2003). He carries his father's questions and concerns and his own negative educational experiences while remaining open to new possibilities. He remains “ingenuously curious” (Freire, 2000), a critically conscious actor. … perhaps the clown standing at the void… The voice of the father that he carried in his head did not say “Do something”.

With Critical Pedagogical practice, “learners” are not considered passive recipients of knowledge. They are involved in actively co-creating the educational activity side by side with the “teacher”. Teacher and student learn from each other. Non- critical acceptance or adaptation of the status quo is not a goal. Themes, or purpose and process of the education become the shared responsibility of the learners and teachers within the context of the social milieu, enacted through dialogue and democratic practices and principles. Power discrepancies and relationships, roles and responsibilities are exposed and become part of the process. Freire calls this a process of conscientization, the ongoing development of critical consciousness for all parties involved in the educational situation through the dialogue and praxis. Praxis as it is used here is going beyond consciousness raising, the individual begins to takes action on and in the world— reflects on that action and then continues to act becoming an actor, agent – a co- responsible creator (Friere, 2000).

Recall the picture of Ben Weatherstaff which was offered as a leading image of the teacher at the beginning of this paper. He works side by side with the children offering his advice and expertise in response to their questions and learning needs, helping them to obtain tools and materials that he has access to. He is enthusiastic and curious as are the children. He learns much from them about gardening, working together, teaching, and himself. The garden and the gardeners begin to thrive.
 Thought Police

It is a sin to write this. It is a sin to think words no others think and to put them down upon a paper no others are to see. It is base and evil. It is as if we were speaking alone to no ears but our own. And we know that there is no transgression blacker than to do or think alone. We have broken the laws. The laws say that men may not write unless the council of Vocations bid them so. May we be forgiven!

_Anthem, opening paragraph_

The thing that he was about to do was open a diary. This was not illegal (nothing was illegal, since there were no longer any laws), but if detected it was reasonably certain that it would be punished by death, or at least by twenty-five years in a forced labor camp.

_1984, first chapter_

1984 is probably one of the most well known works within a genre which has become known as dystopian fiction. George Orwell, the author introduced the “demon” of political purpose into this thesis earlier. The genre generally depicts societies that have gone awry in some way. Often the events which led to the current extreme conditions are not depicted or explained. _Something has gone wrong, What is it?_ Often what served as initiating ideals for the society have deteriorated, become bizarrely exaggerated or dogmatized in a manner that they now create the opposite of their original intentions. For example— an ideal such as collectivism in which high value is placed on the welfare of all citizens can be taken to an extreme in which the individual disappears. Any attempt towards individual achievement is thwarted by oppressive government intervention. Oppressions can take many forms from subtle seemingly innocuous interventions to stringent punitive laws.

_Anthem_ is another dystopian novel or novella. It sheds light on the dangers of rampant collectivism, one of Ayn Rand’s central concerns. The setting is an unspecified time in the future when human beings have lost the ability to say or understand the concept of the “I”. The protagonist is called _Equality7-2521_, that is the norm; no individual Proper names. Equality has a dream, a desire to go to the Home of the Scholars. Such individual ambitions are forbidden. One must strive to be the same as everyone else. Equality has always struggled with this and has suffered the consequences: _for being taller, for knowing the answers, for asking questions…_ He is assigned to the Home of the Street Sweepers. He quietly accepts his fate. He will live the life of service in retribution for his sin, “We are one in all and all in one…” (Rand, 1946).

His inner spirit has not died, however.

Both novels begin with the protagonist secretly writing in a personal diary. Suppressing self expression and the possibility of developing an individual voice are depicted as essential methods utilized in these dystopian cultures. In _1984_, Winston Smith’s job is to rewrite history to fit the needs of the present political agenda. This makes it very difficult to become “conscious of one’s experience as historically constructed within specific power relations” as critical literacy suggests and supports.
**Big Brother**, Newspeak, the Thought Police, Doublethink have entered the English vernacular. The words are used for describing or warning about impending oppression and governmental intrusion into the private lives of its citizens. *Smith* expresses the extreme side of these concerns:

Whether he wrote DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER, or whether he refrained from writing it, made no difference. Whether he went on with the diary, or whether he did not go on with it, made no difference. The Thought Police would get him just the same. He had committed – would still have committed, even if he had never set word to paper – the essential crime that contained all others in itself. Thought crime they called it. Thought crime was not a thing that could be concealed forever. You might dodge it successfully for a while, even for years, but sooner or later they were bound to get you.

*1984, George Orwell*

*Equality 7 -2521* becomes one of the many, for awhile. Several events merge to enhance his growth. He makes a friend in the Home of the Street Sweepers, someone who is not driven by ambition. It is a simple meeting; the friend offers trust and loyalty. Then Equality makes eye contact and shares secret conversation with a woman from the Home of the Peasants, the gardeners. They give each other special names: meeting and recognition. Now, he finds a secret forgotten entrance into the underground of the city. This is the place where the old civilization’s history is buried. Of course, it is forbidden to enter this place. He enters when he is nineteen and goes every day until he turns twenty-one: the time of “the birth of the ego” as Rudolf Steiner calls it or the age when citizens reach “majority” in many societies.

He emerges with his creative discovery, excited to offer it to the World Council of Scholars. He has rediscovered electricity. He brings this light to the scholars. His gift is rejected, “What is not thought by all men cannot be true!” is how they put it. They threaten him with torture and death for his deed. He takes up his gift and flees into the “Uncharted forest”, not to protect himself but to protect the “light”.

Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other (Freire 2000).

*For What it’s Worth*

Something’s happening here
What it is ain’t exactly clear…

Paranoia strikes deep
Into your life it will creep…

It starts when you’re always afraid
You step out of line
The man come and take you away

STOP! children
What’s that sound?
Everybody look what’s goin’ down
Everybody look what's goin' down
(Stills, 1969)

One of the most important tasks of critical educational practice is to make possible the conditions in which the learners, in their interaction with one another and with their teachers, engage in the experience of assuming themselves as social, historical, thinking, communicating, transformative, creative persons; dreamers of possible utopias, capable of being angry because of a capacity for love (Freire, 1998, p.45, 46).

...from A Sleep of Prisoners

Affairs are now soul size.
The enterprise
is exploration into God.
Where are you making for? It takes
So many thousand years to wake...
But will you wake, for pity's sake? (Fry, 1951)

Personal is Political

I borrow this Slogan, “the personal is political”, from the feminist movement in an effort to describe the development process involved in creating this thesis. For example, the picture offered above under the heading “this is what motivates me to write in the first place” is Harry Truman announcing the atomic bombing of Japan. Somehow this lives in my soul having been born seven years after the event. Themes related to the complex of social, spiritual, and economic issues reverberate and find ways to come to the surface

... What part of the soul dies of a society, a culture or an individual when one turns away, pretending that so many people were not killed – they were not really people – they were not killed – it was war it was justified, necessary – it needed to be done – “the communists will be sleeping with your sister…” How does a soul survive when it knows that the most powerful killing machine, a weapon of evil is now in the world – and your government controls it? It may quell any ideas of a revolution, of questioning authority… (journal entry 2007)

I have been working with Active Imagination (Jung, 1965 von Franz, 1979, Johnson, 1986, Chodorow, 1997), a method used in Jungian or Analytic Psychology. Jung developed the method during a time of personal crisis, the period after his split with Freud. The process involves creating an inward space and attitude which allows the unconscious to emerge. It is “active” because the unconscious is not given free reign as in the dream state. This is done while completely awake and attentive. The initial phase sounds similar to what I have called the void. It is necessary to clear an inner space in order to call the unconscious images forth. Finding a means to express or represent the emerging content is the next step. Some people prefer dancing, painting, or one of the other plastic arts. Most often the medium employed is writing. I have chosen to write, that’s my project after all.
Powerful pictures and ideas sometimes rise into consciousness with continued practice and by creating circumstances to nurture the process. Ethical considerations are imperative in choosing how to work with the material. Unresolved emotional, personal psychological issues mingle with social, historical, political and collective archetypal themes. At times the experience can be a bit overwhelming. It is good to have a support system in place to process the work with another person at least from time to time.

The novel Teacher Education emerged as more polished artistic articulation of the Active Imagination work.

Active Imagination working together with Situational Analysis (Clarke, 2005) under the umbrella of Writing as Research may be considered the methodological approach being utilized in this project. Active imagination allows the power of the unconscious to emerge. Situational Analysis provides structure and organizing function, perhaps a filter. Choices can then be made about which themes to deepen or take further, and which to leave for another time and place.

Situational analysis was developed by Adele Clarke out of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Her goal was to help move “grounded theory around the postmodern turn” (Clarke, 2005). Elements of the approach have been employed to help expose, categorize, organize, or graphically depict the themes, and actors that constitute and are constitutive of the fictional world of the novel.

A Situational Analysis of the first chapter of Teacher Education, Tin Soldiers, reveals or maps several areas where power discrepancies exist in relationships between individuals, or socio/cultural/political/economic arenas. Questions also arise as to how influence is affected, ideologies are promulgated, and cultural practices are created or imagined. The authority to validate truth claims is challenged. Dire consequences are alluded to as the price for maintaining the status quo, the scientific, market driven, “macho” world view. The Atomic bomb coupled with Truman’s speech, University students being killed by government agents and the degrading portrayal of women in the high school assembly scene serve as beginning examples.

Teacher Education starts at a nexus point: for the protagonist, for American society, and geographically. Paul, stands two miles above sea level - feet, on the ground, head in the clouds. He stands at the continental divide, the great divide. He gazes at his father who is stuck for the moment at the same age and decision point as him. They both speak the same words: “How can I affect the world? I am dissatisfied, and afraid of what will happen. I feel helpless. What happened? What can I do?”

Winston Smith struggled helplessly as he began to seek out his voice and memories by writing in his secret diary. He did not know who he was writing to. He felt that if the future society was the same as the one he lived in, no one would listen. If the culture had changed, then his situation would mean nothing to them. They would not understand. We read these words from the fictional world of Oceania in 1984:

To the future or to the past, to a time when thought is free, when men are different from one another and do not live alone – to a time when truth exists and what is done cannot be undone:

From the age of uniformity, from the age of solitude, from the age of Big Brother, from the age of doublethink—greetings!
He was already dead, he reflected. It seemed to him that it was only now, when he had begun to be able to formulate his thoughts, that he had taken the decisive step. The consequences of every act are included in the act itself. He wrote:

*Thoughtcrime does not entail death: thoughtcrime IS death.*

Now that he had recognized himself as a dead man it became important to stay alive as long as possible (Orwell, 1949, p. 30).
Teacher Education
Disclaimer 1

This is a work of fiction—a fictional narrative. In other words it is a true story, a novel. The characters are creations of the author who is a construction of the times and place of his living moment as interpreted and written down by a developing true self or his higher ego. Now, you can work or play with these words, sentences… grammar, syntax and create your own world from them and any other ideas that you care to add to the mix or that are present without any label or direct knowledge of their presence or of their effect on your interpretation, feelings, or actions. Characters like George w. Bush and Richard Nixon are not fictional. They are creations portrayed through their own word and actions. I let them speak for themselves.

Disclaimer 2

Teacher Education is intended for the general reader, although it may be comprehensible to or enjoyed by the academic and professional community.
Anthem
Dare not choose in your minds the work that you would like to do when you leave the Home of the Students. You shall do that which the Council of Vocations shall prescribe for you. For the Council of Vocations knows in its great wisdom where you are needed by your brother men, better than you can know it in your unworthy little minds. And if you are not needed by your brother men, there is no need to burden the earth with your bodies.

*Ayn Rand*

We don’t need no education.
We don’t need no thought control.
…dull sarcasm, in the classroom

Hey Teachers, leave those kids alone!

*Pink Floyd*

Teachers bring dreams to life.

*a bumper sticker*
July 18.

So this is a novel he is writing and we are reading?
Yes, I guess this is it.

So, what do you think he is doing?

He is telling a story about his father.

I thought it was Paul’s story. You know he started out with Paul riding up, hearing the loud music, watching through the window, and then remembering something that his father says to him in the future. That seems confusing to me. I would say very confusing if that didn’t over do it. Do you think Paul really thinks that there is some big connection between all of this Kent State massacre, Vietnam, Hiroshima, rock music stuff and his research project? And, by the way, how do we know about that scene at the schoolhouse? It’s still in the notebook, and may be changed a few dozen times before it makes it here. See, it was already changed from a garage to a schoolhouse and the car to a bicycle: and Word is eleven miles from Boulder, and it is really called Ward…

I read the notebook. I get the drift already. Paul wants to make sense of himself, the world, his father….He’s planning to follow every clue he can find….It’s just got to add up, serve his purposes, and satisfy all the requirements.

You’re making this all up. You can’t possibly know what’s going on let alone what is going to happen. How do we fit in? Who are we supposed to be? Who is writing this story anyway? Are you? Is it Paul, his dad? I know it’s not me. I’m having enough trouble trying to read it. Where are the women? Will there be a mother or a girlfriend, sisters, a wife in this story?

Be patient. I almost said, “Shut up and read”, sorry. Listen to Paul. It will all make sense in the end. Don’t worry.

I’m not so sure about that.
Chapter 1.

**Tin Soldiers**

You can’t know who I am. I may be your guardian angel. I may be his guardian angel.
I may be the Trickster... I am Trickster. I am coyote. I am Loki. I am foxy woxy. I am Lucy in the sky with diamonds. I am the Walrus, coo koo cachoo... No? OK I’ll be your local Leprechaun...

Come, follow me—you can trust me... I know!

The music was loud, louder than he had ever heard it before.

*Tin Soldiers and Nixon’s coming*  
*We’re finally on our own...*

Paul saw his father through the window of the old schoolhouse. The windows were rattling and the floor boards vibrated from the heavy strong angry rock beat.

... this summer I hear the drumming  
**Four Dead in Ohio**  
**Four Dead in Ohio...**

It did not surprise Paul to see his father sitting like this. It was the 4th of July. When he was little he often heard his father’s friends “talk him down”. “You can’t have flashbacks, you weren’t even in Viet Nam”, they would shout at him or whisper softly in his ear so that they could get through to him over the fireworks. Paul was never afraid when he saw dad like this, even as a child. Somehow, he understood.

... how could you leave her  
if you found her dead on the ground  
how could you run if you know...

*when you know... When you know...*

Now they are killing the students. They are killing the students. They shoot them in the parking lot from the top of the hill. Now *we we we* are killing the students. In China? Not today. In middle America, America—land of the free, home of the brave... America the beautiful... God shed his grace on thee...

**Four dead in Ohio, Four dead in Ohio, Four dead...**  
**Four killed in Ohio.**
Paul had read all about Kent State in his high school history class. The class seemed kind of fun at first. Students and teachers dressed up in long-haired wigs, bell bottoms and lots of tie-dyed stuff. The kids brought in their parents old Grateful Dead and Blodwyn Pig albums. They feasted on homemade brownies and “health food”: brown rice, bean sprouts and tofu. The principal even got into the act, shuffling to the podium in sandals and rose colored glasses flashing the peace sign. “Peace Brothers and sisters, welcome to our ‘Remembering the hippies’ assembly” he slurred in a soft stage whisper voice as the pep band played a brass rendition of “Woodstock”.

…By the time we got to Woodstock, we were half a million strong, everywhere there was a song and a celebration…”

Paul had grown up on the words, and stopped laughing at this point— quietly took off his wig.

The assembled student body rolled with laughter as Mrs. Cunningham, barefooted in a long skirt with water balloons to make her look braless, flirted with the gym teachers who were dressed as WWII full combat soldiers. She seductively rubbed her water balloons and petted the men’s steel rifles as she placed giant day-glow plastic daisies into the barrels. Over the laughter rose Jimi Hendrix’s Star Spangled Banner played very softly, as the principal speaking in his normal voice brought home his theme: The absolute absurdity of the idea “peace, love, and happiness”. The pep band over took Hendrix and led the assembly to the football field for free hot dogs, cokes and AT&T phone cards.

Everyone managed to keep their clothes on.

There was one paragraph in the text book that mentioned Kent State:

**Student Unrest**

… The National Guard was called in by the governor of the state of Ohio to protect the well being of the majority of students and prevent further property damage at Kent State University. A group of students led by outside agitators ignored legal injunctions forbidding right to assembly and stormed the troops with violent gestures, verbal threats and peace signs. There was rumor of a sniper and possible rock throwing. On May 4th 1970, four students died after the Guard fired a volley of shots into the crowd in an effort to quell the violent protest. Government investigation into the incident eventually found no wrongdoing on the part of the National Guard…

This may have been when Paul began to wonder if he was getting the “truth” in his education.

His father had a box full of newspaper clippings, books, pictures, and tape recordings of personal accounts of the tragedy at Kent state. Paul especially remembered the pictures:

- The famous one of the agonized girl kneeling next to the dead boy.
- Soldiers with gas masks and students running among familiar American hero type statues.
- A group of pre-med looking students huddled around a fallen, bloody friend— knowing that they would not be able to save his life.
- The “firing squad” with smoking guns aimed straight at the fleeing students.
- Bayonets.
Paul had written a term paper for this course titled *Patriotism: then and now*. He used the box as resource material. He got an A, with no comments from the teacher. He could not recognize the heavily edited version that was published in the student magazine. The small tear drop that he had placed in the corner of the American Eagle’s eye on the cover page had been airbrushed away; replaced with blood red lines—looking fierce and determined. His quotations were either cut due to “un-verifiable source” or “abbreviated due to space constraints” like this one by the president, Nixon, from two days before the “incident” (sic, massacre):

“*You know, you see these bums, you know, blowin' up the campuses. Listen, the boys that are on the college campuses today are the luckiest people in the world, going to the greatest universities, and here they are, burnin' up the books, I mean, stormin' around about this issue, I mean, you name it - get rid of the war, there'll be another one.*”


Printed as “... the (people) that are on the college campuses today are the luckiest people in the world, going to the greatest universities...”

And the long segment of Ohio Governor James Rhodes’ speech which included statements like,

“...*This is when we're going to use every part of the law enforcement agency of Ohio to drive them out of Kent. We are going to eradicate the problem. We're not going to treat the symptoms.*”

and referred to the “dissident groups” as *Night Riders and vigilantes... the worst type of people that we harbor in America...* was completely eliminated.

*...the reporter’s voice on the recording asked:*

**How long do you expect to keep the Guard at Kent?**

*Gov. Rhodes responds:*

**I'll answer that: Until we get rid of them**


In his effort to discover the meaning of Patriotism or “love of country”, Paul had included all of President Truman’s speech to the American people after the dropping of the first atomic bomb. The speech began in this way,

“*Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima, an important Japanese Army base*”...

This may have been where Paul began to wonder if he was getting the “truth” from his history books (or political leaders, for that matter).
He posed questions, wondering if Philadelphia, or Boulder or Denver would be described as “important military bases” in future high school history books. This was being written just one year before American cities were in fact attacked violently on 9/11. Another president responded with words like these:

“They are the axis of evil; they hate everything that America stands for.”

While one of his high cabinet members reportedly told representatives of a smaller but highly populated Middle Eastern country:

“We’ll bomb you back to the stone age, if you don’t help us obliterate the terrorists.”

Paul won the Good Citizenship award from the American Legion for the published version of his research paper. They cited his astute awareness of the interconnectedness of the various sectors of U.S. society and they especially liked the powerful portrayal of the Eagle. The local newspaper built their story around this portion of the Truman speech:

Both science and industry worked under the direction of the United States Army, which achieved a unique success in managing so diverse a problem in the advancement of knowledge in an amazingly short time. It is doubtful if such another combination could be got together in the world. What has been done is the greatest achievement of organized science in history.

They did not use this portion:

We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japanese have above ground in any city. We shall destroy their docks, their factories, and their communications. Let there be no mistake; we shall completely destroy Japan’s power to make war. (… where have all the people gone… long time ago…I don’t know.)

This may have been where Paul began to wonder if there was “truth… “

He did not bother to go and shake hands with the president at the award ceremony. His teachers didn’t get it. They went to Washington without him.

Paul remembered all of these pictures, memories from high school, as he stood looking in at his father. The scene that he was witnessing seemed like a sacred event—an aura of grace filled the space. Dad had sometimes called these moments his meditation practice or “prayer time”. Paul had not decided on his own beliefs about these things, but in this moment he sensed some kind of “Presence” perhaps this was the Now experience that his dad and all of those beat authors talked about.

Much later, at his college graduation, Dad will tell Paul, try to explain something, something of who he is, what happened:
“This is my pain—I stopped there, we stopped there—I couldn’t do anything—We had some sense of power—we had power—something like love was coming into the world—it was love, it was in the world—we could feel it, we knew it. Some things changed: the war ended, Nixon resigned, the draft was over… we were on the verge, something new was possible…

Did we lose the vision, get lulled into complacency, sell out? Maybe we had the wool pulled over our eyes. It was as if someone, some they, had given us the power for awhile, so that we could feel satisfied, placated—live in the realm of possibility… and not notice the subtle changes… then the Regan’s bit:” the silent majority”, “America love it or leave it”, “just say no”, “trickle down economy”—and we begin to have nostalgic and romantic memories of those “good old days”—when we thought it was possible for “love, peace, and happiness” to become a way of life—our parents knew about this—like Hiroshima: heroic American soldiers hoisting the flag with the bombs bursting all around—No image, No recording of the sounds of babies and work-a-day people screaming, melts—just the mushroom cloud and the flag—Pearl Harbor: a day that will live in infamy! I wonder what the Japanese call those two days when the “basic power of the universe” “the force from which the sun draws its power” had been unleashed on them.

These kinds of thoughts had been forming in Paul’s mind for awhile now, thoughts about ideas being “neutralized”. How is it done? How can something real and honest be turned into a cartoon or circus? Who does it? The power just oozes out like a water balloon with a pin prick.

Paul knew that his honors project related to all of this. He just didn’t know how yet.

* I add this here as a footnote because out of the first 20 people that I showed this to only 1 remembered hearing about Kent State. 3 had heard of the Neil Young song, 17 recognized the line from Woodstock, everyone knew about Hiroshima. The respondents in this sampling were all from northern Europe or a Nordic Country, two were under 25 but the rest were over 35 years old.

In 1970, the US was still enmeshed in the Viet Nam war despite rising protest at home. President Nixon made the decision to invade Cambodia without approval from Congress. He claimed that this was simply an extension of the war with Viet Nam not a declaration of war against a separate country. You know, a bit of “they all look the same to me” syndrome.

This fueled the anti-war initiative. The idea that a president could declare war without an act of Congress enraged even staunch supporters of the government’s ongoing Viet Nam policy. Demonstrations erupted throughout the US, especially on college campuses. The one on the Kent State campus carried the theme “Bury the Constitution”. On May 4, 1970 these students: Allison Krause, Jeffrey Miller, Sandra Scheuer and William Schroeder were killed by National Guardsman who had been called to the Kent State campus by the governor of the state to contain the protests.
While Waiting for Dad

Paul decided to hang out for awhile before flying back down the mountain. Dad could emerge from his meditation soon—or perhaps Annie would return from her walk. Talking with Annie always left Paul feeling that he could do anything. She was not an over the top, in your face power of positive thinking kind of woman. She just had a way of listening, actually hearing and understanding. Something in Dad’s eyes and somewhere between his shoulder blades had softened since he and Annie got together.

From the picnic table behind the school house, you can see … it all, heaven, forever, the history of the universe, a lot of nice things? One could say, “It is a very good view”, or “a majestic vista”, or “if word gets out people would pay good money to sit here for the afternoon” or one could miss the whole thing and sit there wrapped up in his own thoughts, worries, and important life concerns. Paul had always been a both/and kind of guy. He would do both now.

He took out his carrot juice, spring water, crystal pouch, and notebook and settled in. He laughed as he did this, “I’ve been in Boulder too long- me with a crystal pouch, carrot juice?” From this place, he could spot Annie coming up the mountain in front or coming down, which was more likely, from the mountain behind, to the East.

“Alright, enough of this nature stuff, time to get down to the real work”. He smiled, and wondered simultaneously if he was smiling and laughing too much lately, as he recalled the meeting with his advising committee. Somehow, he had managed to convince this group to accept his proposal. Now, he was beginning to wonder what he had gotten himself into.

He remembered the words of his proposal:

Detective fiction reflects the undercurrents of social, scientific, and economic trends, debates and shifting viewpoints. The genre allows for multiple approaches to searching for the “truth”; for solving life's mysteries. Sometimes, the hardnosed, almost bullying way gets you there. Some situations require you to seek out all of the facts and plod step by step to the ultimate conclusion. Other times, one follows hunches, dreams, and intuitions— almost meandering toward the final solution. There is always the hope, promise, belief, a certainty that the truth will be found and faithfully rendered in the end.

Thanks to his superb rhetorical skills, a gift for the Blarney, and his past record of success, he now had a mountain of a task in front of him. He had committed to writing a novel for his senior honors thesis… a detective novel that would satisfy the requirements of all three of the disciplines involved: Literature, History, and Education.

Each of the advising professors had their own questions, criteria, and above all personal preferences:

Prof. Harbaugh, dean of Comparative Literature had done his dissertation on: Iambic Pentameter as Social Nuance implicit in Shakespeare's Tragedies. His last article was called French Ticklers, Apple pie, and the lost art of Foreplay in the Modern Novel. His nose was genetically programmed to seek out the North Star when he heard talk of such low genres as Crime Fiction. “I'm already warming up to the task, running out some real nice Chandlerisms (Raymond, that is),” thought Paul. Science fiction found him running for the porcelain throne… “On a roll now” Popular Romance… “Better quit while I’m ahead.” Paul had won him
over with talk of August Dupin, Edgar Allen Poe’s great detective. Sherlock Holmes seemed acceptable too, although Arthur Conan Doyle raised a suspicious eyebrow.

Dr. John Littlejohn III had nodded and smiled seemingly lost in his own thoughts during most of the advisory meeting. His smile faded, a look reminiscent of someone on their first roller coaster ride, eyes staring straight ahead- not seeing, sweat appearing on his upper lip when Paul talked about George Orwell, 1984, doublespeak, George Bush, and the possibility of re-writing history to fit the political agenda of the regime in power. The professor tried to speak, “B… B… Buhhh…” was all that came out. He returned to his reverie as Paul gently shifted the topic to how the detective genre had been instrumental in quelling anxiety after WWII, promoting rugged individualism supported by science and principles of justice.

The advisor for Education and teaching practice could not stay for the whole meeting. He was working on his MBA while maintaining a full teaching and supervisory load. He said, “I don’t read fiction anymore, not since high school.” Paul mentioned a TV crime program to draw him in. The very popular CSI series used high end scientific procedures and equipment to accurately process crime scenes, producing data leading incontrovertibly to the correct perpetrator of the crime. Successful prosecution was guaranteed. The stars of all the versions of the show: Miami, Las Vegas, New York were fond of saying things like, “The evidence doesn’t lie” or “it’s all in the facts.” Having noticed Professor Skinner’s business aspirations, Paul tactfully avoided mentioning his observation about the relationship between CSI’s portrayal of truth through scientific investigation and the current administration’s Scientifically Based Research agenda: Bush Science as some were calling it. Paul promised to file short progress reports via email at least monthly. He had the distinct feeling that the man hadn’t heard a word that had been spoken in the meeting.

*Does this seem strange to you? Is someone pulling our leg? These odd names and almost caricatures for the professors: What’s up?*

*Maybe it’s Paul revving up his imagination; maybe he sees these men in this way; maybe they are really like that, a caricature of “the professor”, lost in a role, lost their self somewhere over the years.*

*Yeah, or maybe it’s just the author having some fun.*

*Still wondering about this author, are you?*

*Yes. I am.*

Paul was ready to go. He started writing:

*Dan Doyle, private investigator and used book dealer.*

His boyhood friends called him “Sherlock” as in “No shit, Sherlock” both for his name and his famous “deductions” and theories. One of his theories proved a smashing success and a wrecker of havoc on the lives of some who put it into practice.

The boys hated high school. Not the learning part, although for the most part the mode of presentation, depth of coverage, and methods of measuring knowledge were boring and
outmoded. They hated and resisted, each in their own unique way, the indoctrination into a system and a way of life that that they found appalling, almost criminal.

Paul was sliding naturally into this new way of writing, a new genre for him. He would follow the advice of some of the successful crime and popular fiction writers and continue in this way: first developing a character analysis through short biographical sketches and then work on setting. He was pleased with the name he had chosen for his protagonist. He wanted a strong Irish name like his father or an imaginary uncle who was bigger louder angrier meaner and even nicer and more gentle than his father. Dan Doyle, Danny, “Sherlock”, “Red” or sometimes “Wildman” was just right for an auto-didactic Detective/Book dealer on South Street in Philly: A real Ken Kesey-MacMurphy/Florence Nightingale-Mother Theresa kind of guy.

Paul laughed (again). This would be a good one on his father: to model his “private eye” after him.
Chapter 2.

Philly

Danny and his crowd were the smart guys in the school. He was the only jock, an all-catholic football player. The coaches wanted him to play Quarterback. He was fast, strong and could throw accurate long and short passes. He saw the whole field and understood defenses intuitively. The other players followed his lead.

Dan chose to play middle line backer on the defense. He liked to crush the quarterback. He could smell the fear as the usually cocky primadona called the signals, the quaver in his voice perceptible only to Dan. He often helped the trainers lift the guy onto the stretcher and stopped by the hospital to check on him after the game. His future looked certain: full ride to Notre Dame on a football scholarship and pre-med or law if he wanted it. His great idea changed all of that.

The Free Library was an exciting place for a young reader from the suburbs. Dan and his friends used to take the train into town on Saturdays, spend some time in the library and wander around on Sansom Street or Rittenhouse square for the afternoon. He was researching the Viet Nam war. He was a pacifist, except for his football behavior, but wanted to come to his own opinion about the situation based on facts and history. That was how he found the book about the GED exam and came up with his grand scheme.

The exam was designed to help GIs whose lives and education had been interrupted by WWII earn a High School equivalency diploma. With this certificate and the assistance of the GI Bill these veterans could go on to college and buy a house in the newly developing suburbs. In other words, they could rejoin the quest after the American Dream.

... and that was how Dan ended up sitting in a hole in the ground somewhere outside of Hanoi smoking his brains out while most of his friends were wallowing in the mud smoking their brains out at Woodstock.

Now Paul was veering away from his father’s life story. Dan was becoming an individual, with his own biography and personality while still maintaining qualities and aspects of dad.

Patrick McIntyre, here known as “dad”, was one of the half-million who were at Woodstock. He was one of the many-million spectators to the war in Vietnam: watching the nightly parade of body bags in the living room on network news. He was personally touched when two boys from his high school had been killed there, older brothers of his best friends.

He had graduated with honors in English from University of Pennsylvania, completed med school and his residency in emergency medicine and Psychiatry at the same place. It was during his first year at Penn that the students at Kent State were killed by the National Guard. Something shifted for Patrick and his friends when this happened. It was as if the world became out of sync, words slurried and slowed, people appeared to walk as if the air was thick like silly putty. Newscasters and politicians speaking on TV took on grotesque almost animalistic features. This was a shared experience for Patrick’s crowd. They discussed the phenomena in all night cosmic conversations.
They likened the experience to an on-going bad trip or acid flashback even though most of this group had discontinued psychedelic experimenting before coming to college.

It was beginning to become important to Paul that this character he was creating, in fact that was beginning to come alive for him, have a life of his own. In the end, Paul knew that he would make all of the decisions for Dan Doyle but he wished that he could let go and try to let Dan tell him what those choices were. He wondered if Dan’s moral or ethical dilemmas were the same as he perceived his father’s to be. Would they make the same choices given a similar difficult situation? They were both basically “good” men, so he imagined that they would. This would have to be part of his ongoing research. He would need to hone his own empathic, perhaps mind reading skills.

So, like a good detective, Paul decided to look at some of the evidence about each of these men as compiled so far. One was fictional and one real. They were about the same age. Dan may be one year older than Patrick. Both were strongly influenced by the Viet Nam War. They are both book shop owners. He knew how his father had ended up in Boulder, at least part of the story. How did Dan choose South Street for his place? Paul needed to think about this a bit. What did he really know about Philadelphia? For that matter, why did he choose to put the store in Philly?

If he wanted to get psychological, and he was trying to avoid it, he might guess that he was just looking for “home”. He didn’t want to even get started looking into what the whole project idea revealed about his psyche. Paul had only visited Philly once when he was about five or six for when his dad’s college friend got married. They had visited all of the likely spots: the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, the zoo, Betsy Ross’s house, Valley Forge, the Free Library – Philadelphia, City of Brotherly Love, Quakers, Revolution, Independence, and Freedom!

Now, he was beginning to get a glimpse of the deeper significance of Philadelphia as the setting. He was anxious to get more into the plot.

Dan was definitely “strongly affected” by Nam. His grand plan for him and his “smart” friends to quit school and immediately take the GED exam met with resounding success. Five out of the original twelve in on the pact actually did it, scoring way off the charts, causing the testing board to re-evaluate the test content. For Dan, the consequences started almost immediately with the letter from Notre Dame withdrawing his scholarship, in fact rejecting their original acceptance. He thought, “Oh well, I still have Pitt.” and went on. And then… he turned 18 in June and received his letter from the US Army just after the 4th of July. That is, of course, how he spent August of 1969, the “Summer of Love”, in a trench with his new found friends eating out of cans and smoking as much pot as he could keep burning.

Paul closed his eyes as he remembered the story about his mom and dad’s meeting at Woodstock. His father had told him more about this happening shortly after Paul had started college. He had always avoided the parts about the psychedelics involved although Paul had read between the lines. Paul had only a dim image and memory of his mom. She was always most beautiful and magical in these pictures given by his father about these days at Woodstock. Paul imagined her singing in a voice like Joni Mitchell, or Melanie, and sometimes for a laugh- Janis Joplin. He wanted her to be free and light like a bird, funny and innocent, and raunchy loud and irreverent when she felt like it. Perhaps she had been all of those things. He really had no way of knowing. He relied on memories of stories and a few pictures.
Paul’s mind shifted abruptly back to his story. The “bad guy’s” picture began to emerge out of the depths. It’s a detective story. There has to be a bad guy and a crime; a mystery to solve. The Detective, in this case Dan Doyle, would have to take the case, get a retainer for a daily fee plus expenses and begin gathering evidence, finding clues and eventually catch the criminal, solve the mystery and explain it to all involved and interested- then return to his daily humdrum existence, lonely and single. He should have some romantic or at least sexual adventures along the way, a few fights, getting badly hurt in at least one of them. He should be filled with self doubt often imagining a different life sitting quietly in a nice home in the suburbs with a wife and children and an office job with friendly colleagues, an ornery but benevolent boss and a regular and ample salary. Oh yeah, he needs to have an ambivalent relationship to rules and regulations and those who represent and enforce them i.e.; the cops. He will be honest with them and perhaps have one among them with whom he has a relationship of mutual trust and respect. Paul recognized that Dan was emerging with certain qualities, interests and ideas that would alter some of these hard-boiled plot lines but he had confidence that he should start off in that direction and see what happened.

Paul knew that he needed to come up with a mystery and therefore a nemesis that would challenge Dan’s type of imaginative intelligence, his sense of righteousness and justice, his sense of humor. This could not be a simple ‘who dun’ it’. There needed to be many red herrings, obvious in your face clues that would seem too obvious, practical jokes, mythical and mystical allusions, and a social significance to the case. That was one of the problems with modeling Dan Doyle, private eye and bookseller after his dad. He could test his story line on his father. If he could fool Dad, then fictional Dan would probably be having difficulties figuring out what was going on.

... so is this what this is becoming now, a competition with father? Can a son surpass the father? Can he be smarter than the father? Will he be able to out-smart him? Will the father love him more or less if he does?

Paul took out the roll of paper from his pack. He started in on one of his infamous maps. He would begin mapping the story: plot, characters, themes, and relations to reality or what he would begin to call the “non-fictional” world”, the fictional reality. He had been making them since he was a toddler. First they were made by placing his toys around him naming each one as a person, feeling, problem, or something that he wanted. He never knew where to place his mother in the maps. He knew which object played her though. It was the fading felt rose made for him by his grandmother. He kept it under his pillow and talked to it before going to sleep and sometimes, maybe all the time, all through the night. The style of the maps evolved and morphed over the years; sometimes elaborate, intricate, and colorful now often just black and white with circles and arrows and squiggly lines. The place of the rose remains constant.

He started on the first two of his list of the maps that he anticipated needing to guide him through this project. First, the character maps: fictional and non-fictional characters. These would map their relationships and be helpful in developing a character analysis, at least for the fictional ones. Second, he called the “map of the Moment”. He planned to visualize the scene, the moment, when he stood watching his father through the schoolhouse window. He would chart the themes, feelings, associations, memories, objects, and sensations of that extended moment- perhaps 15 minutes. This map would provide the basis for the plot of the Detective novel. All or at least many of the themes that he discovered in that moment would be explored as the story of Dan Doyle unfolded.
The first map was sparse: Dad and Paul on the non-fictional side— with hints at dad’s new Wife and mom’s ghost, Dan and “the hare” on the other, the fictional guys. The hare’s name would need to be kept secret for now and the story would show who is really tortoise and who is the hare. Paul tried to make the metaphor of “the Road Runner and Wiley Coyote” fit but couldn’t get it to jive yet with the relationship he saw so far between Dan and his nemesis. The Road Runner was always seen as the “good” one being chased and victimized by the sneaky and incompetent Wiley and his high tech ploys. Road Runner was fast and smart. He could start and stop on a dime with his famous “beep, beep”. He was “cute”, all smiles perky feathers. Coyote was not. Paul and his father’s favorite scene went like this:

Typical plot— after many failed attempts to capture the speedy road runner, some of them so traumatic for Wiley Coyote that it was surprising that he could still be alive and in hot pursuit—

The road runner is enticed into a blind, rock walled canyon. There appears to be no escaping his fate this time. He stops on his proverbial dime and produces a painter’s pallet out of nowhere and paints a tunnel on the granite wall. Coyote is just out of the frame, as he comes into sight, Road runner, a bird by the way, runs into the tunnel “beep, beep” and disappears. Wiley scratches his head, builds up a full head of steam, and crashes violently into the wall. This does not do him in but the train that comes hauling out, crushing him surely must. Road Runner and Coyote live in different worlds. They experience reality differently. Wiley just doesn’t have any imagination.

Maybe this would work in the end. It had a lot of metaphorical potential. It was hardly a mystical allusion but it carried memories and personal meaning at least for him and his dad. It stirred primal images and feelings, probably had some connection to the archetypal world. The tortoise and the hare was burdened with so much protestant work ethic baggage, the same baggage that dad, Paul and now Dan have been working to shed. It could be the parable that they were still operating under, however. “We will wait and see”, Paul said to himself, “and then there is always Sylvester the Cat and Tweety Bird.” Cute little innocent Tweety Bird sitting happily on her perch high up in the tree- like an angel while blubbering hungry Cat, Sylvester fails forever to capture he and eat her up… He had to leave it there for now, another unresolved conundrum. He could tell that it was time to work on developing the new character, “the hare”.

He spent many evenings and sometimes whole weekends watching those videos. He sat in his room alone, no popcorn, no footstool or blanket, no lights, curtains closed- the story of his life, curtains closed. He was actually watching the story of his life, gathered from the KYW archives- given to him as a courtesy, a kind of repayment of the debt. The executive at the station did not know how to handle the request when “the hare” first made it. It was imperative now that his name and location remain a secret. He had requested the news stories in his own name then and in the other city. He only began watching them after he moved here, to this new place. The executive had finally made a small fanfare over the gift of the videos to the young man. A small article was placed into the local news paper painting the station and reporters in a positive light- not mentioning the sensational and melodramatic, high revenue producing, controversial elements surrounding their original airing. There had been quite a stir. The Hare or H as we will begin to call him was too young and too numb to take much notice at the time. Sometimes he overheard others at the hospital talking about the TV shows portraying his family. They always stopped talking when they noticed him standing nearby.

Some days he watched the first clips over and over without the sound turned on. In this one he can make out the framed picture of his mother on the mantle piece. There is a cut to a full
screen shot of her high school picture, blonde shining hair, smiling blue eyes. The way he remembers her eyes before she got so sick. The grown-ups whispered CA-CA not caca but C... A. The mantle picture is the only one left. His father gathered all of her pictures, clothes, papers, and favorite books and burned them in the back yard one night when he came from visiting her in the university hospital. His mother never came home after that. It was a very long time and his dad stopped talking and stayed mostly in his room, the sounds from the old war movies sometimes kept H awake all night. He was only ten years old but everybody said he was bright for his age, a “big Boy”. Dad came out only to feed him and his little sister. She was a baby and stayed mostly in her basinet. She didn’t cry very much. She was a good little girl and H took good care of her.

He remembers himself as being in a daze when the policeman came to the door but the news clip shows otherwise. He is smiling, almost laughing. He looks like a clown from the ice cream stains around his mouth and on the tip of his nose. The camera lingers first on his smiling face, with no light in the eyes and then scans the room showing mountains of empty ice cream containers: lots of Breyers ½ gallons- vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry with the 2 for 1 sticker visible, a few Ben and Gerry’s- chunky monkey, and many WaWa gallon-mostly chocolate. He had just watched the news before the police stopped by. He saw the people standing by the river. He recognized the bridge. It was the same one that he used to walk the dog on with his grandfather. It looked like his father’s coat; the one he wore when he left on his walk and gave H a handful of money saying, “Go buy yourself an ice cream cone”. He wondered why his dad would have so many rocks in his pockets. He remembers how the policeman looked when he looked at his sister, saw the empty WaWa milk carton and threw up when he smelled the sour milk. The basinet and his sister were gone by the time the cameras got there. H could see the place where the policeman had puked. The smell came back to him now each time he watched.

He needs a rest! I sure do. What is this “Hare” character all about? Where does he come from? What is the difference between a hare and a rabbit anyway?

A rabbit is born unable to walk or see. It needs a secure nest, warmth, and time to slowly move out into the world. A hare is born out in the open, able to walk very soon—never really experiences the nest or his mother’s warmth. They are both pretty fast though and like carrots.

What’s that have to do with anything? He seems really weird and very scary. What’s he have to do with research?

I don’t know. Maybe it is some kind of clue or metaphor or psychological lacunae of the author.

Paul needs a break here, a few pages to digest this new character. Maybe you do too. I don’t have that luxury. I have to live with it. Where did he come from? I have some ideas. Paul is too innocent, too young to grasp these bubbleings from the unconscious realms. I couldn’t have him write that
the policeman, a veteran of so many gruesome crime scenes, had really vomited from seeing and smelling the blue dead baby girl, smeared and sticky with ice cream, not from the sour milk. I was not even able to make him say clearly that the little sister was dead. She is dead. She choked on one of K’s marbles. This finally broke the father, smashing whatever soul he had left after his wife’s death. He left, filled his pockets with rocks, and walked into the Schuylkill.

What would happen if Paul could meet a positive feminine character this early in the story? He needs to write about pedagogical principles, the history of schooling and teacher education, epistemology, ontology, the identity of the teacher... not get distracted by these calls from his psyche. That would be too dangerous. Paul needs to stay innocent. He may seem a little cynical and sometimes sarcastic but he is still open and hopeful. He isn’t easily fooled by bullshit and fancy rhetorical tricks so people often don’t notice his vulnerable center: the hole left in his being by his mother’s suicide.

He must be kept from discovering this for himself at this time. He will never be able to finish his project if this unfinished business is revealed. It will overwhelm him, cripple and paralyze him. I will bear this for him for now. He must see the social, political, economic, and educational themes when he draws his map. I will keep a secret map of the personal, psychological issues. He must talk about science and art and the media. I will hold on to the dying feminine aspects: the plastic water balloon breasts,
pricked and seeping water not milk or blood, dead girls on the ground, melting babies, the atomic mushroom of rage, and dying mothers. I may give the maps to Paul at the end of the novel or perhaps I shall bury them in a chest in the garden near the roses.

Cannon to right of them, Cannon to left of them, Cannon behind them Volley'd and thunder'd; Storm'd at with shot and shell, While horse & hero fell, They that had fought so well Came thro' the jaws of Death, Back from the mouth of Hell, All that was left of them, Left of six hundred.

Some one had blunder'd: Theirs not to make reply, Theirs not to reason why, Theirs but to do & die, Into the valley of Death Rode the six hundred.

Mothers and babies fall, He must not see it all, Our most beloved Paul Keep all this deep inside; Let all your demons ride, Over the mountain side Into the deep abyss Crashing and hissing.
Chapter 3

Dinner with Annie: the castle of wonders

She stood up abruptly, blew out the candles, turned on the fluorescent overhead lights, and pulled the old blackboard to the front of the classroom. Paul didn’t have his pen and pad for once so he took notes on his napkin using his tea spoon and the mustard. She began, “Parzifal is a medieval legend written down in the 13th century by… although there is much debate about the origins, the actual author has not been authenticated.” She went on to describe the translation history, various theories as to the meaning of “the grail”, knighthood, chivalry, and the differences in the surviving texts of the story. She finished with, “Are there any questions and would you like some coffee?”

Of course this is not how it happened. Annie never did anything “abruptly”. She had long ago replaced the fluorescent lights with a candelabra chandelier, skylight, and a mural. She sometimes used a blackboard when she was lecturing at the university but usually only to help jog her memory or for poems or short quotations.

This evening Paul and Annie were finishing dinner on the deck that Dad had built outside the schoolhouse last summer, the first thing his father had ever ‘built’. They were watching the early fireworks erupting from the valley. The sun was working its magic… was it teal? blue? pink? The animal totems began to speak in the shadows, you could hear their whispers. What language were they speaking? Paul listened to them as Annie made coffee and put the ice cream over the hot apple cake. “I am rabbit. I call out, I am afraid of you—leave me alone; and then they come to me. What I fear comes to me. I call my fears and they come.”

“I was reading that while I made dinner”, Annie told him as she returned with the coffee and cake. “I saw four rabbits on my walk today, so I wanted to read up on Rabbit medicine.” “Your dad had the book out this afternoon.” These kinds of synchronicities happened frequently since Annie came into his father’s life, but they still gave Paul a shiver when he noticed them. She must have seen the rabbits and been reading about their particular ‘medicine’ while he was writing the story of H in his notebook. “I wonder what totem animal dad was reading about”, Paul thought. There was a note in his father’s handwriting on the rabbit page. “Find out what the difference is between a rabbit and a hare!” There was no way to tell when this had been written.

Paul had been working in his notebook for several hours without noticing the time. The sun had already started the evening dance when Annie had tapped him on the shoulder. He was trembling and felt as if his body was becoming like smoke or fog and could blow away if a breeze came suddenly out of the valley. He was thankful for the gentle interruption. This odd character that he found himself creating had tapped into something new for Paul. He couldn’t make any sense of it yet.

“Come, have some dinner. I saw you sitting when I came off the mountain; I didn’t want to disturb you.”

“Your dad’s gone to bed. He was exhausted from the afternoon. You know how it is for him sometimes.” Paul did know.
“He wants you to stay here while we’re off to our workshop.”
Paul said, “Yes, I think I will. Thank you.”

Now, after dinner, sitting in the glow of the twelve candles, eating the homemade apple cake ala mode Paul told Annie about his project and about H. She listened. She was a good listener. Paul noticed that he was not trembling inside anymore. His body had regained its form. He felt heavy warm and very tired. After a comfortable silence, Annie asked, “Do you know the story of Gawain and the Castle of Wonders?”

“There once was a brave knight called Gawain”, she began. Her musical Irish brogue painting the pictures so clearly that Paul began to see them move around the room. The old school house was transformed once again: Lady Adventure announced her presence with sounds of the joust, the smell of the horses, the trumpet call…

In the morning Paul found the book Annie had promised, a well worn copy of Parzifal. She had marked several pages with post-its with labels like: Teachers, women, lessons, Gawain and Castle of Wonders, and the Grail Castle. Dad had left a brochure for the clowning workshop they were off to. It described the “Clown” as The Possible Human. There was a note from his father, “This is where we will be in case you need to get in touch. We are not taking cell phones and there is no internet access”, and “Paul, everything here is open to you. Please use my office. I hope you find everything that you need here.” P.S.—The truck keys are in the kitchen, Love, Dad.”

“There are many clues here”, thought Paul, “the Castle of Wonders, the ‘Clown’, and dad’s only slightly veiled invitation to go through his boxes and papers.” These will help Dan Doyle unravel his case!
Chapter 3 ½.

Class Assignment

Please re-read what has been written so far. Write a series of poems inspired by the reading. Inspiration comes in many forms. It may come from the themes, personal memories, reactions to the style or voice of the writing, or even a desire to counter balance themes or images offered by the author. This could be called “unpacking” the story with poetry. Don’t try to “figure it out” or “analyze”. Just notice what stands out for you, what affects you either emotionally or intellectually, or what you remember. Create your poems from there.

The poems may be in any style: haiku or haiku-like, lyric, or free verse. You choose. You create. Please try to avoid “pseudo” poems. For instance,

```
this is
a
stupid
assignment

i
need
an
A
```

is not really a poem. It is two sentences posing as a poem. Many academics fall prey to this when they attempt to challenge traditional writing practices.

The Poems

Coyote and leprechaun
dance.
The pot of gold
bubbles
on the hearth.

*Keep on searching, Neil.*

Teach me to sing,
I am a singer.
I sing.
Please sing with me.
Please sing to me.
You are a singer.
You sing.

Teachers don’t dance
Will you dance
With me,
Teacher?
A Chapter similar to Chapter 4

... Returning to the novel

We have had Paul sleeping on the couch in the old schoolhouse after his dinner with Annie for two weeks now. He fell asleep as she was telling him the story of Gawain and the Castle of Wonders. This was to spark the idea for The Hare’s “crime”. Would he have a Secret place where he took little girls after kidnapping them from their parents, single fathers? Then Dan Doyle could be Gawain and battle for the release of the females. He would have to go against the prevailing police mentality, “they are being taken into sex slavery. They have probably already been murdered.” The “Hare” takes care of the girls. He is trying to protect them. Dan figures this out. He is intrigued by the sculptures that begin to appear during the night around downtown Philadelphia. He tries the “numbers” search: the sculptor probably lives within a predictable proximity. He discovers themes: the cream of mushroom soup, milk cartons, and newspaper hats. These tell him about the sculptor but they don’t lead him to him. This is because the hare does not know the significance of the representational forms. They rise from his subconscious as he creates his art.

Dan finds him purely by chance. He sees him finishing a piece on his way to an early AA meeting. He follows the young man. He turns out also be a regular at the meeting. He is usually quiet, but today speaks about serenity, peace, “the first day in a long time that I didn’t want to take a drink.” He is a “newcomer” and needs a sponsor. Dan is an old-timer. He offers to be his sponsor. They go out for coffee.

The idea is that Dan helps the young man to find out his “history” which has been lost due to Electro-shock therapy as a child and alcoholism as self medication as an adolescent and adult.

Dan discovers that The Hare’s grandfather wrote the speech and memorandum for Harry Truman when he told the American public that the US had dropped the first Atom bomb at Hiroshima in Japan. His grandfather was a news and advertising copy writer who got into the speech writing group as a political perk. He had written good articles for his local democratic congressman. He was low man in the group but was the only one in the office when the request came in. He wrote them off quickly without giving it much thought.

He spent the rest of his life trying to make up for this act. He became a professor of Rhetoric, obsessed with how words, the media, advertising can be used to manipulate political agendas. He had little time for his family.

The Hare’s dad took up science with a similar passion and obsession. He “believed” in science. No milk for his children; they would be nourished by the laboratory formulated cocktails created through commercial research corporations. He was devastated beyond hope when “science” failed his dying wife. He watched her wither away suffering from the pain of the cancer and the radiation and poisonous chemical used in the treatment. He began to see his father’s point, his life mission. He watched footage from Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Tokyo. He listened to the politicians speak. He watched old TV commercials. He read about educational curricula and policy. He discovered: The Big Lie. It had been there all along.
That is when he left, gave his own little son a handful of money and said, “Go buy yourself some ice cream.” He left his dead little daughter and helpless, vulnerable son; filled his pockets with rocks and walked into the river.

This was the plan. Write all of this into an intriguing detective plot. Challenge the paradigm a little by creating a mystery about “What was the crime here?” “Who committed the actual crime?” … that kind of thing.

Paul was disturbed or is it perturbed, anyway he wondered (again!), “How can I sit here in this relentlessly beautiful isolated place and write this stuff? I want to help the world. How can this help?” His first “map” had pointed to deep seated psycho-emotional issues involving the loss of his mother and a “wish” to “find” her or revive her, bring her back to life somehow. Maybe by writing he could help himself some. He knew the therapeutic value of writing. Writing his diary and fantasy had kept him safe all through childhood. He wanted to see if he could use writing as a social therapeutic tool, to step out a bit from his own biography.

The second map highlighted political issues. There were many references to war. How can I make this a Peace Studies initiative, peace and social justice? Was it permissible for academic research to make a political statement? He was preparing to teach after graduation. How could a “teacher” express or stand for a political ideal?

Start with Hiroshima: That is the worst atrocity that has been committed. Remember how Truman commented, “The world should be thankful that Hitler or Stalin didn't find it first…” or something like that. It is indicated that Truman meant, “Imagine if someone who is really evil wielded this weapon… not a kind, gentle, guardian nation like the US…”
Section III: The Novel Situation
III. The Novel Situation

Individual Human Actors/Elements
Sons, Fathers, Professors, Presidents, politicians, teachers, authors, students, national guardsmen, the disillusioned idealist, Paul, Dad, Dan, Nixon, Reagan, Truman, A Detective

Collective human Actors/Elements
The media, Academia, Student revolt, Government, The National Guard, War Veterans, Grandparents, Gender

Metafictional Devices
Flash back – flash forward, A novel within the novel, The self-conscious/self reflecting critical narrator, Text is conscious of self, Multiple voices, Critical dialogue

Temporal Elements
Decades: 50’s, 60’s, 70’s 80’s…, Generations, Mediaeval times, 1776

Spatial Elements
State university campus, USA Cyber space, Philadelphia – Boulder, the Continental Divide, the “academy”

Political/Economic
War, Presidential rhetoric, Military industrial complex, Political, economic, scientific, and media collusion

Literary Devices
Political satire, Detective novels, Historical footnotes, Graphic/shocking imagery, Fonts, letter size, Bolding, Cursive, Literary vernacular

Human Discourses
Anti war/nonviolent discourse Jargon, Social Constructivism, academic disciplines

Ordered situational map: Tin Soldiers (Clarke, 2005)

Non Human Elements
Rifles, Bayonets, Daisies, Pedestals and pews, Books and (news)papers, Gas masks, Mushroom clouds, Beauty of nature

Socio/Cultural/Symbolic Elements
The American myth/dream, Americana, Football fields, AT&T, Hot dogs vs. health food, Good citizen award, American Legion, Tricksters, doubles and guardians, Memorabilia, Jimi Hendrix and the Star Spangled Banner, the Disneyfication of history, real events, of America, Independence day, Children’s games (Tin soldiers), Fireworks, The Flag

Cultural Icons
Mother Teresa, McMurphy, Jimi Hendrix, Neil Young,

Related Discourses/ Historical narratives and/or visual
Medieval university/medieval times, Books and texts, Computer age technology, Popular songs, Propaganda, Censorship

Major Debates/Issues
War – peace, Violence – non-violence, Students/teachers/education, Hierarchical structures, Censorship Lies served as truth, First Amendment Right to peaceable assembly and request redress of grievance, What is research? What is the purpose of science? Murder, massacres, war and atrocities. Pop culture vs. “high culture”, Testing in schools

Discursive Constructions of individuals and collectives
Truth, Fiction, Art, Science, Interpretations, Stories, Pictures, Impending irony verging on sarcasm, Political correctness, Bully tactics as political rhetoric, Political spin becomes neutralization, Co-opting and twisting words, Counter cultures, Terrorism, Patriotism

Implicated/Silent Actors/Actants
Scientists who invented the bomb, Presidential speechwriters, The computer, Evaluation and censorship, The attitudes and concerns around recreational drug use, GENDER ISSUES
Metafictional Analysis

Metafictional narrative "is process made visible". Overtly narcissistic novels place fictionality, structure, or language at their content’s core. They play with different ways of ordering, and allow (or force) the reader to learn how he makes sense of this “literary world”. In a similar vein, the novel "no longer seeks just to provide an order and meaning to be recognized by the reader. It now demands that he be conscious of the work, the actual construction (Hutcheon in Thibodeau 2003).

My approach to life, research, creativity, teaching and learning came to expression in writing in this form which resembles metafiction. This was a way to get rid of the incessant “I”, always resounding in a biographical narrative style of writing while at the same time not needing to create an objective or pseudo objective ‘voice of authority’. Many voices could be present, interacting in a myriad of ways- sometimes laughing, sometimes arguing, dancing, cajoling, convincing, or recanting- with other divergent attitudes, opinions, and ideas. The research process has been similar to other approaches: gathering data through reading, conversation, interviews, or observation—thinking about the “data”, reading, talking some more—then beginning to write: fictional passages, journal entries, notes, maybe a poem or two—then composition, designing and creating the final ‘product’ to share with others.

The composing of the novel did *not* begin like this, with an outline:

1. Find picture to satirize academic situation
   a.) classic painting of Medieval University
   b.) Embed *Teacher Education* into Image of Medieval University.
   c.) new/old technologies, micro-soft Word/fine arts
2. Power relationships in education
   a.) Multiple epigraphs with ironic voice (objectivist philosopher, British rock band, kitsch American pop cultural artifact)
   b.) utilize metafictional, self-reflexive conventions (recurring critical voices, novel within novel)
3. Create incantation
   a.) to problematize “authorship” and textual truth
   b.) find multi-cultural spiritual “trickster” or “guide” beings (Ireland, Scandinavia, Indigenous American)
4. Setting/ Context
   a.) American socio-political struggles
   b.) War and peace (“4th of July”- Revolutionary, WWII, Viet Nam, “on terrorism”, and anti-war movement)
   c.) Atrocities (Hiroshima, killing of students by government)

The key concept of a metafictional work is its reflexivity, the making of the process of creation visible. The reader is reminded that this is a created work and elements of the process are kept in focus. The novel is written in that way. That has also been a goal for the thesis. Personal journal entries, poems, songs and literary images are woven into the more explicit exposition. Although there are specific themes that are being forwarded it has not been a goal to name them explicitly, allowing for alternative meanings or images to emerge for the reader, perhaps quite contrary to those favored...
by the author at times. The purpose is not to persuade or convince or ‘teach’ but to engage in an activity together.

The novel chapter Tin Soldiers is examined in depth, other chapters may be mentioned.

Immediately prior to the first scene we read this conversation between two unidentified but interested observers of the situation. They seem to be outside and inside of the situation at the same time. They begin to critique the novel before it gets started.

So this is a novel he is writing and we are reading?
Yes, I guess this is it.

So, what do you think he is doing?
He is telling a story about his father.

I thought it was Paul’s story. You know he started out with Paul riding up, hearing the loud music, watching through the window, and then remembering something that his father says to him in the future.
That seems confusing to me. I would say very confusing if that didn’t over do it. Do you think Paul really thinks that there is some big connection between all of this Kent State massacre, Vietnam, Hiroshima, rock music stuff and his research project?
And, by the way, how do we know about that scene at the schoolhouse? It’s still in the notebook, and may be changed a few dozen times before it makes it here. See, it was already changed from a garage to a schoolhouse and the car to a bicycle and Word is eleven miles from Boulder, and it is really called Ward…

I read the notebook. I get the drift already. Paul wants to make sense of himself, the world, his father…He’s planning to follow every clue he can find…It’s just got to add up, serve his purposes, and satisfy all the requirements.

You’re making this all up. You can’t possibly know what’s going on let alone what is going to happen. How do we fit in? Who are we supposed to be? Who is writing this story anyway? Are you? Is it Paul, his dad? I know it’s not me. I’m having enough trouble trying to read it. Where are the women? Will there be a mother or a girlfriend, sisters, a wife in this story?

Be patient. I almost said, “Put up and read”, sorry. Listen to Paul. It will all make sense in the end. Don’t worry.

I’m not so sure about that.

This prefatory dialogue contains most of the major elements that will be found in the chapter. It identifies the genre and places the story in the world - geographically, socially, politically, and personally. Questions and underlying motifs are initiated. The reader is engaged, made aware of the structure, construction, and development of ideas. This presents certain challenges to the reader; it is difficult to maintain the stance of passive recipient of knowledge or meaning. Author and reader are involved in a dialogue, a meeting. Placing the fictional narrative into the context of an academic thesis provides an additional avenue for exposing the constructive process.
This passage from Patricia Waugh points to elements of ‘Critique’ of methods, and brings questions of ‘fiction’ and ‘reality’ into focus:

Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality. In providing a critique of their own methods of construction, such writings not only examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also explore the possible fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text (Waugh, 1984).

In the dialogue above we see these issues frontloaded.

Is this a novel? It may be a novel. Who is writing and who is reading? Is it biography? Whose story is it? Is it the father’s story or is it the son’s story? A fictional city is mentioned but is ‘really’ a real city, near Boulder. The story is being written and changed in a notebook. Is it research? It is a mystery with clues and a solution which ties it all together. It may be a war story. Or is it about peace? Is there a feminine presence? One voice needs it to all make sense in the end. One is sure that it will.

Where in the world is this project? Why is it important? What is going on in this situation? Who and what are in this situation? What elements “make a difference” in this situation? (Clarke, p. 85 & 87)

The organized situational map above has been created to illustrate possibilities for working with fictional narratives in research endeavors. As has been noted, an outline designed to incorporate material into the text was not used. The elements that constitute the map were gathered in several readings and discussions. Ideally it would be helpful for a group to work together to discover and gather these elements.

Situational mapping is being used here to graphically organize thematic content, stimulate interest in the issues, move away from personal discussion, and to possibly spark interest for future experimenting with the method. In Situational Analysis Clarke (2005) gives specific examples of how the method can be adapted to suit project needs. Although extensive use has been made of the methods in analyzing various discourses, she does not mention fictional narrative.

The situation out of which the fictional narrative Teacher Education emerged has been mentioned previously. This is a loosely arranged sampling of elements constituting the masters program: personal biography of the participants, educational experience, geographical setting, arrangement of the classroom, privacy, access to technology, access to ‘outer world’, access to daily living materials (i.e., food, laundry), themes from the opening ceremony, structure of the day, multiple languages, cultural background, farming community, lecturers, students, philosophical underpinnings, age, gender, individual as well as collective goals, environmentalists, researchers, teachers, farmers, foresters, “Foldsae” and Norway. One could already easily imagine a new situational map arising from this initial listing of elements.
The Novel Begins

Teacher Education

The cover is a full color facsimile of a very old (1320) oil painting, the “Medieval University” (deVoltolina), rendered digitally through the miracle of modern computer technology. A scribe stands on a pedestal above and in front of a group of students reading the faithfully reproduced words of an original, inspired author. There is a hierarchy implied in the seating arrangements, the podium, and the side table for the other scribes. I chose the image in protest, an ironic symbol for our present approach to university education. Saying something like, “We are still in the dark ages.”

Today, I look at the picture and see this:

Three men who look very much alike form a kind of triangle on the left side of the painting. One is on the podium speaking or reading a text, another looks toward him as if to prompt or insure that the text is correct, the third is in the audience with the students. He looks intently and calmly upwards toward the speaker/reader. I have an imagination that the man with the students is the author of the text, listening for a faithful and accurate recapitulation of his ideas and perhaps his words. This triangle appears to be the container for the content being presented, the guardians. They are the only ones that I am “sure” are engaged with the text, content, or theme. The others may be but the intensity of their involvement is not easily discernible. I notice that none of the students are writing.

Here I have ventured into interpretation perhaps in the guise of description. We have really been in the realm of interpretation since the start. How can one tell the story without interpreting? Julia Kristeva has said “whenever you move into the realm of interpretation, you enter the realm of fiction” (Kristeva in Guberman, 1996). How can I tell a story without saying what I see? Even the colors are experienced and named differently by each viewer.

I was worried that the university culture had not moved on from this time: strict dogma presented to students in lecture format, with possibly some kind of examination to judge how closely they can reiterate what they have heard or intellectual value judged on very narrow and illusive criteria. I still carry this concern. I see the debates around Scientifically Based Research, Standardized Curriculum, and student testing in the US as reflecting this concern (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, McLaren 2005 and 2007, Giroux, 2003, Itzumi, 2001). These concerns led me onto the path to investigate how teachers learn to teach, how teaching and learning happens, and what elements in all arenas are operating in the learning situation. My focus became, writing: learning to write, gaining a voice through writing, the freedom to write in one’s own words, one’s own tongue, the situatedness of language and narratives. It became important to explore styles of writing and elements of language, particularly the tension between the semiotic and the symbolic. What are the potentials for relationship between reader and writer, or listener and speaker?
Now, I look more closely at the picture of this Medieval University:

There are some students who gaze with apple cheeks at the speaker. They appear engaged. What are they thinking about? What do they hear? How do they interpret the words? One seems to be in deep despair. Is he taking in the ideas? Is he reflecting the theme? Some are reading. Are they reading the text being presented, another text, pretending to read? How do the words they hear interact with the words they are reading? Some are talking. Some may be praying; some looking lustfully at their neighbor. My initial response to reject this picture of a dogmatic method of educating adults and sharing knowledge begins to shift. I see that however strictly the knowledge is conveyed—the students take it in in their own way, filter it through their own life situation and experience.

What is the author of this novel saying with this picture? What does the text convey to the reader? What effect does it have on a typical reader? How would a general reader take in and react to the text so far, and ongoing? How would an academic respond? How would the author’s mother, student, or wife read the text?

More clues are available through reading the disclaimer pages. The author has taken on an ironic tone. He is taking a jab at intellectuals, academics, politicians, the reader, and himself.

“Didn’t this say that this was in fact part of an “academic” paper, a Masters Thesis?

Yes, it is.

This could be dangerous for the writer. Could it jeopardize his grade, his future? Is it possible to challenge the master narrative while within the confines of that narrative? Is this a goal of this author? Is be afraid?

Yes, a little but he goes on.

Disclaimer 1

This is a work of fiction-- a fictional narrative. In other words it is a true story, a novel. The characters are creations of the author who is a construction of the times and place of his living moment as interpreted and written down by a developing true self or his higher ego. Now, you can work or play with these words, sentences… grammar, syntax and create your own world from them and any other ideas that you care to add to the mix or that are present without any label or direct knowledge of their presence or of their effect on your interpretation, feelings, or actions. Characters like George w. Bush and Richard Nixon are not fictional. They are creations portrayed through their own words and actions. I let them Speak for themselves.
The irony and challenge continues with the three Epigraphs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epigraphs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anthem</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dare not choose in your minds the work that you would like to do when you leave the Home of the Students. You shall do that which the Council of Vocations shall prescribe for you. For the Council of Vocations knows in its great wisdom where you are needed by your brother men, better than you can know it in your unworthy little minds. And if you are not needed by your brother men, there is no need to burden the earth with your bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ayn Rand</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We don’t need no education. We don’t need no thought control. …dull sarcasm, in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hey Teachers, leave those kids alone!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pink Floyd</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Teachers bring dreams to life.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>a bumper sticker</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anthem: The dire consequences of rampant collectivism, rejection of anything achieved by the individual, power and control by authorities who know *better*. Pink Floyd, *The Wall*, the students revolt, anarchy. A *shift*: The return of hope, possibility, dreams, the redemption or transformation of the role of the teacher.

These *beginning pictures* provide one side of a frame for this chapter. They are the frontloaded metaphors which influence the reader and set the theme.

Looking at the ending of the chapter will provide another part of the frame.

The *incipit*, the beginning of a Detective Novel, a novel within a novel comes at the end of the chapter. This is Paul’s fictional thesis (Actually it is Paul’s real thesis. He is a fictional character.). Julia Kristeva makes these comments in reference to her own detective novel, *Possessions*:

> In the criminal and virtual universe of Santa Varvara a police investigation is still possible: the detective novel, a popular genre that keeps the possibility of questioning alive, basically tells the reader, “You can know” (Kristeva, 2006).

Metafictional (Waugh, 1984) detective stories like Paul Auster’s (1987) *New York Trilogy* and Umberto Eco’s (1980) *Name of the Rose* call into question the notion that it is even possible to “know”, and challenge the idea that a crime has been committed. There is great mystery and
intensive, rigorous, and wide ranging investigation involved in the search. The process and the story
overshadow the solution.

This text moved from the declaration: *A Masters Thesis* for a Norwegian University College to the
description of an *auto-didactic Detective/used book dealer* in Philadelphia by way of the Rocky Mountains,
from academia to genre fiction, high culture to popular culture, from academic research to fictional
narrative in one chapter. We have straddled the “Great Divide” so to speak.

A reader could suspect that the story records biographical incidents. In this case, since I am the
author, I can say clearly that there are no biographical *facts* or incidents in this story. My father never
went to Woodstock. He retired from the Railroad and now enjoys his grandchildren’s activities and
lounging in the pool. My mother is alive and full of interest in her family and watches basketball until
the wee hours of the morning. I did not go to Woodstock or Viet Nam. I never kept a journal or
made maps as a child. There *are* biographical, socio-cultural, and historical influences in evidence. I
write as a *child* of my times. This is again taken from the first paper of the master’s program:

This was the end of the 60’s. There was a new slant on our parents’ belief in “Better Living through Chemistry”\(^3\). We were beginning to: "rock the boat"\(^4\) make love
not war” ”tune in, turn on, drop out”\(^5\). The positivist, scientific, "paternalistic"
world view was being challenged on all fronts: political (Stop the war!), educational
(“Free university”, sit-ins, dialogue), psychological (Gestalt, Esalen, primal therapy),
spiritual (be-ins, rock festivals, and Eastern religions), and even in science (the new
physics, systems and, chaos theory).

*Then came Reagan.*

"America, love it or leave it!"; "just say no"; "trickle down economy".\(^6\) The
socio/economic elastic band snapping back, hard and fast: a powerful move to
forestall the imminent paradigm shift. The shift continued, but in an underground,
quiet way, helping to create the social/political polarization (i.e. red and blue states)
that we now see in the U.S.

My personal wake up call was influenced from reading authors like Kurt Vonnegut, Richard,
Brautigan, Jack Kerouac, Ken Kesey and George Orwell. These authors each spoke with a powerful
voice that challenged the status quo with humor, raw life energy, parody, and straight forward
narrative. They spoke or wrote the world as they saw it reflecting counter-cultural shifts and
concerns. Then of course there was the music of the times… Neil Young, Jimi Hendrix, Bob Dylan.
We were the Woodstock generation. Marching, protesting, demonstrating poets, artists, students,
people. I bring all of this with me Norway into 2007.

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\(^3\) (see note 3)

\(^4\) There was a popular saying in the 1950’s: “don’t rock the boat” which implied that one should not question
authority.

\(^5\) Attributed to Timothy Leary, Harvard professor who became the spokesman for counter-cultural values.

\(^6\) These are famous “Reaganisms”- from Ronald Reagan, US president.
Soul Battles

Mothers and babies fall
He must not see it all
Our most beloved Paul
Keep all this deep inside
Let all your demons ride
Over the mountain side
Into the deep abyss
Crashing and hissing.

... In the end, I had to let go of the novel – for now.

The novel wanted to grow and move in its own way... it wanted to search for its meaning, follow paths, walk the labyrinth, go into the fiery places, take on those emerging psychosocial issues, dance between vulnerability and rage.

It could not thrive, breathe in the realm of censors and grades; it could not stick to a predetermined path, thematic guidelines like research or education. This may reflect inner resistances or unfounded fears but they exert real influence.

A Voice Emerges

... A baby, an infant wakes up. She has been smiling in her sleep, held by the warmth of her father’s arms. Her eyes open, arms, hands and finally legs and feet begin to reach out moving randomly in the air. Her tongue can be seen reaching with the same kind of movements—licking her lips, the soft pad on her upper lip—licking the air, tasting it. Something shifts. Her face begins to redden, the movements become more forceful and jerky. She begins to cry; at first tentative short bursts, building quickly to loud, fierce, demanding. The father sits, waiting.

He is waiting for her to say, “Sir, I am really quite hungry now. Would you be so kind as to give me a sterile bottle filled with warm milk. I thank you very much for your interest in my well being and express my gratitude in advance for your kind response to my humble request.”

“... the signifier/signified break is synonymous with social sanction: ‘the first social censorship’” (Kristeva p.48).

The child has a voice. Can’t you hear it? She is wailing, crying, screaming out.

Please, father, let go of your governing rules for now. They will kill your daughter.”

Will the father work to understand her language, the language of her body, her drives and instincts? What will happen to the father if the child dies?

“...The core of the symbolic lies in the fundamental drives of the signifier, that is, in sensations, perceptions, and emotion” (Kristeva in Gubermann, 1996).
What kind of balance can be found? A loving relationship which allows both father and child to thrive must be possible?

I came to this image while working to understand Julia Kristeva’s (1984) picture of the relationship between the semiotic and the symbolic. She identifies the semiotic as the rhythm and drives underneath language, or pre-language acquisition. These are associated with the mother’s body and are present prior to speech in the Freudsian pre-oedipal stage.

It must be said that this question is related to the notion of "chora" which directs us back to the archaic state of language. This state is known to a child who is in a state of osmosis with his/her mother during which language manifests itself as co-lalia, a melodic alliteration that precedes the introduction of signs within a syntactic order (Kristeva in Zivancevici, 2001).

Language is already being regulated prior to the imposition of the “symbolic”, which Kristeva associates with syntax. The rhythms of the mother’s body before and after birth, the mother regulating what the child takes in are the seeds of language. They are present before formal language emerges before the symbolic provides structure. These semiotic impulses do not disappear. They give meaning, energy, life to the symbolic. The “Symbolic” in Kristeva’s picture gives form, grammar, and syntax to speech. The Semiotic can not be expressed or at least understood in the world without the Symbolic structuring as the Symbolic would not have any life energy without the semiotic. The symbolic arises out of the semiotic but the semiotic has no way to communicate effectively in the world without the symbolic. This is a symbiotic relationship.

I have offered the image above portraying a one sided view. I have demonized the role of rule maker, painted this role as oppressor. I moved something that is intrapsychic into the social realm. The image reflects my bias toward freeing the suppressed voice that can be represented as the “semiotic”. On a personal level this is my big brother role. (I have five younger sisters, and two younger brothers.) I more often choose on the side of the underdog. I prefer to ‘question authority’ and support others to do the same. The personal familial moves into the social/political and mingles with the archetypal world…

Soul battles, inner work

With this introduction of the semiotic/symbolic break or relationship, I am searching for a way to describe the kind of inner activity involved in writing between genres. I have said that I “had to let go the novel for now”. I have found a way of writing with which I can move more freely. Patriot Acts, a novella, written in the first person is working with the same themes. It is in the first person but not as “myself.” I take on the role of another. That may be helpful. Even though Teacher Education is not autobiographical the Jungian methods that I have been employing have initiated a heightened degree of personal psycho/spiritual/emotional activity. Patriot Acts evolves within a more contained and goal directed form.

Freudian inspired approaches like Kristeva’s describe individual psychic challenges and developmental processes, while the Jungian Analytical approaches such as Active Imagination; traverse the level of Archetype, or in the collective unconscious. After the emptying out of the ego mind, the unconscious is invited into dialogue, inner conversation with the material that emerges. These examples can be seen in the novel:
The narrative moves toward poetic language (Kristeva, 1984) with its shifting scripts, repetitive phrases, use of song, vivid imagery, or metaphors. At one point, it sounds like a children’s book or game: We, we see are killing the students… This may give evidence to the semiotic exerting its influence. It is possible to visualize a continuum with poetic language as one pole and the mathematical equation at the other. The novel seeks a place of movement between the poles.

Archetypal material appears in the mushroom cloud, and the recurring images of the dying or degraded feminine aspects, the paralyzed father figure and the son starting on a quest. The critical voices, a metafictional device, are reminiscent of the observing reflective ego and the calling of the tricksters, doubles, or guardians as the chapter opens, indicates invisible energies at work, as well as questions about the reliability of the narrator and the nature of truth.

Winston Smith in 1984 decides to move out of the realm of thoughtcrime and commit the act of writing. He begins to dream of his mother immediately following this conscious deed. The feminine begins to re-emerge in the dream image of his mother, long ago “disappeared by Big Brother”. We hear calls from the unconscious in this overtly socio-political dystopian novel (Orwell, 1949). I am not sure how Orwell worked, but the images which manifested in Teacher Education were not planned or designed in advance of the writing, they were found in the reading. Of course, which to keep and how to compose are conscious decisions made by the author. I have discussed previously that at least three or a synthesis of three methodologies have been employed during the creation of the texts: Writing as Research, enlivened by Active Imagination and structured or filtered with the help of Situational Mapping.

The creative process looks like this: Emersion in the situation - physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual emersion; followed by a Reflection or Meditation type activity; then Letting go or “Emptying”- non-judgment (the void). Finally, Dialog with emerging content and images; giving Voice through a variety of Writing activities.

As the writer and the reader at this point, I am choosing to introduce or lightly touch on the manifestations of unconscious content through the form or imagery in the text, but not go very deeply into an Archetypal analysis, merely indicating the potential.

Here the age old human struggle is clearly recognizable. This is not a new conflict, the struggle between order and chaos. In Anthroposophical terms, it is the ego mediating between the chaotic sentient soul and the ordering, intellectual soul forces. A difference is that now the inner private world is on public display, open for critique and judgment, or interpretation by others; a vulnerable place. Choices can then be made about which themes to deepen or take further, and which to leave for another time and place.

My fiction wants to scream and kick and fuss, my thesis (wants to do this also). Something, some voice, some tradition – demands more structure, stability, and order. Some part of me is protective, wants to remain hidden. Witness the intrusion of a narrator, perhaps the author as he protects his protagonist, the bearer of his story:
It will overwhelm him, cripple and paralyze him. I will bear this for him for now. He must see the social, political, economic, and educational themes when he draws his map. I will keep a secret map of the personal, psychological issues. He must talk about science and art and the media. I will hold on to the dying feminine aspects: the plastic water balloon breasts, pricked and seeping water not milk or blood, dead girls on the ground, melting babies, the atomic mushroom of rage, and dying mothers. I may give the maps to Paul at the end of the novel or perhaps I shall bury them in a chest in the garden near the roses.

… Like a “good enough” father or a gently protective big brother.

**Writing styles**

Several contemporary authors have explored the history of academic writing style and preference. Elbow (2000), Gergen (1997), or Shotter (1999), offer interesting perspectives. Gergen (1997) waxes eloquent in this reflection on his concerns and observations of academic writing:

> Can means be located, one asks, for stepping outside the comfortable but unreflexive traditions, developing new forms of writing, and reshaping the relationship between author and reader? Specifically, as scholars have become increasingly sensitized to the politics of hermeneutics, and concerned with the potentials for totalitarianism, suppression, and injustice subtly secreted in the interstices of expression, experiments in inscription have begun to flourish (Gergen, 1997).

These authors do not advocate abolishing academic writing or even give support to an immediate radical shift. They offer pictures that indicate the socially and culturally constructed quality of what has been called academic discourse in different settings and historical-political climates, and track the trends emerging into the present. Elbow (2000) brings some humor as he describes cultural and theoretical style preferences:

> …The bulldozer tradition of high Germanic scholarship. Give no prominence to your own ideas. Emphasize the collecting and integrating of the ideas and conclusions of others… Cite everything—sometimes even your own ideas under the guise of someone else’s… The genially slightly talky British tradition… Citations and references are kept to a minimum… Poststructuralist, continental discourse: allusive, gamey—dark and deconstructive… German Critical or Marxist discourse that is heavy on abstraction, special diction and terminology—and very consciously ideological… Psychoanalytic criticism uses its own linguistic and intellectual practices…
… I can’t tell my students whether academic discourse in English means using lots of structural signposts or leaving them out, bringing in their feelings or personal reactions or leaving them out, giving evidence from the poet’s life for interpretations or leaving them out, referring to the class, gender, and school of other interpreters or leaving them out—nor finally even what kind of footnotes to use. Even if I restrict myself to composition studies, I can’t tell them whether academic discourse means quantitative or qualitative research or philosophical reflection. In short, it’s crazy to talk about academic discourse as any one thing (p.238-9-40).

The styles and preferences of academia frequently contain, imply and support ideological values, cultural norms and preferences, hierarchical systems. For an excellent discussion see Universalistic handbook discourse and the local needs of writers, which investigates underlying values in the Chicago and the MLA style Guides, particularly the challenge that such strict guidelines poses for non native English writers (Lappanen, no date available) Imposing language and cultural oppression are primary tools of colonization. For an extreme picture concerning control of language practices, consider another often repressed chapter of American history. Native Peoples were forced into schools and coerced into giving up their own language and culture. Children were removed from their families and relocated to facilitate this conversion. In recent times, The English language takes on colonizing proportions as it becomes the international and business communication standard.

I catch myself once again; building the argument in a more or less traditional way; finding support from experts to support my point of view, taking the other opinion to the extreme negative pole. I know one reason. I object to one group pronouncing judgment or exerting power over another. Where does the power come from? What are the rules? Who makes the rules?

Freeing Writing
…on the practical or practice side.

… imagine the feeling of a nine-year old school boy who wrote a composition entitled "My Father" in which he explained his feelings about the death of his father and received the following answer from his teacher: "Tenses, you keep mixing past and present" (Blackis, 1965, in Fatemi, 2000).

The epigraph was posed as a “pedagogical dilemma” (Fatemi, 2000) in an article about recognition in writing. It portrays a worse case scenario: a rule bound teacher choosing to focus on grammar conventions or form of the language rather than the meaning or significance. The writer of the words or text is not seen or considered. The devastating effects for this child are easy to imagine. Something of a curative or recursive method is called for; a writing process that nurtures the voice which has been shut down or neglected.

We move now from the realm of the psycho spiritual and into the practical world, trying to take the attitude and lessons learned with us into this arena. The question can be posed, how can I begin to write? Natalie Goldberg (1986) suggests the idea of developing a writing practice. She teaches writing out of a Buddhist point of view. She describes preparation in much the same manner as that which is called for to initiate the process of Active Imagination. Find a quiet safe space, let go of preconceptions, goals and ideas – start writing! The primary goal when beginning is “keep your hand moving” (Goldberg, 1990 p.2). Write non-judgmentally, non-aggressively with reverence or kindness
Everyone Can Write.

At the CCCC convention this year (2007), Peter Elbow spoke about his current project, “Is it possible to get back—what you gave up when you started writing?” In his paper at this year’s conference Literacy and the Struggle for the People’s Eloquence, Elbow talked about his ongoing research into the relationship between speaking and writing. He is investigating the clash between “speech inflected language” and what is sometimes referred to as “Proper” literacy (Elbow 2007, presentation). He points to an “ideology of prescriptivism” stemming from the 18th century which introduced a sense of “immorality”, “uncleaness”, in “improper” dialect and initiated the need to “go to school to learn the rules”. This led to standardization of writing practices and drew lines between “Right writing”, and “Good writing”. (Personal lecture notes) In a separate paper in progress related to the theme, he formulates the concept like this:

**Good news.** Humans master language by the age of four. Any undamaged human who grows up around talkers will be a competent user of a more complex language with more bells and whistles—more rules of grammar and intonation—than any linguist has ever fully described.

… So the good news is that virtually every human child masters a rich wonderful complex language. Better yet, this native spoken language is easy to use. If we have a thought or feeling that we want to tell someone and the conditions are safe and comfortable, we can just open our mouths and words come out. We don’t have to look for them or plan them. Sometimes we even find unexpected words coming out of our mouths…

**Bad news.** Despite the fact that every human child learns to use a rich, wonderful, complex language, somehow it turns out that (in our culture at least), this language is not considered acceptable for writing… (Elbow, 2007).

Elbow is best known for his work with adult students and writing in the field of composition studies. The titles of some of his books can illustrate the direction of his thinking and teaching attitudes: *Writing without Teachers, Writing with Power, and Everyone Can Write*. His methods promote “safety” for the newly emerging and developing writer. He wants to give students the sense of freedom to play with their voice and style of writing while gradually moving towards more polished writing appropriate for the discourse community that they wish to join. Approaches like: graduated writing assignments from “low stake” to “high”—with low being completely private and free to high being a publicly shared and graded paper, alternative and graduated evaluation and grading methods, and group writing and publishing projects all serve this end.

In *Everyone Can Write* he tells the story of a grammar school that instituted some of the practices that he employs with adult students. Each of the very young students authored and published a “book”. A journalist who visited the school, with a slightly sarcastic tone, said to one of the students, “So, you’ve written a book have you?” The child replied innocently, “Haven’t You?” (Elbow, 2000)

The theme of self expression in academic writing is prominent throughout Elbow’s oeuvre. His understanding and teaching on the subject spans personal story, theoretical exploration, and practical methodology. He shares his biography beginning as a young enthusiastic confident writer in high school to almost withdrawing from academic pursuit in despair over his writing ability while at
Harvard and Oxford. From this state of, as he says, “Illiteracy at Oxford and Harvard” (2000), and a profound sense of an inability to write he has moved to being the recipient of the CCCC Exemplar Award as, “… representing the highest ideals of scholarship, teaching, and service to the entire profession” (2007 Conference Award Ceremony).

Elbow does not purport to call forth the unconscious as in Active Imagination but his practice of Free Writing heads in this direction. Free writing is unfiltered writing, an opportunity to write out all that you know or think about something that you are interested in. The results are not for sharing or judging. It is for no one else to read, no stopping to fix grammar or punctuation just writing perhaps timed at first, like Natalie Goldberg—leaving all introjects, outer rules, and judgments go… no reflective ego presence to begin with. This is a rewarding experience and more difficult than it may seem:

*Journal entry… from a ‘free’ writing exercise*

... Writing to learn and learning to write or both. What do I know about all of this? Why can’t I let go and not let the mistakes on this paper stand, correct them later or let them stand. This is just for me for now, only people that I ask can read or evaluate or judge this. MS Word can judge, Can I shut off the automatic spell checker or let my grammar choices override theirs, who ever they are- Computer programmers, linguist, etymologists translated through programmers—Father Cribbin, dad- keep secret rather than risk the judgment/criticism of these powerful others. Maybe I don’t want to speak their language, maybe I don’t understand, kanjse they will know how stupid I really am if I write it down. Maybe I really don’t know anything anyway...

... here I am fighting with the word processing program. **Stop telling me that I can’t say it the way that I want to. Stop with all the red and green lines… and yes thanks for pointing out incorrect spelling** (Journal entry 2006- pilot project).

Frequently, in Free Writing or Active Imagination there is material that can be utilized later but this is not the goal. There is often power present in the voice of this style of writing that is not available when all of the sanctions are in play. Gradually shape, style, and forms necessary for formal regulated writing tasks can be brought in with the idea that something of this raw or untamed voice remains. This is in line with the ideas mentioned earlier regarding critical pedagogy and Waldorf Education.

**Unpacking**

*The conditions of the situation are *in* the situation.* There is no such thing as “context.” The conditional elements of the situation need to be specified in the analysis of the situation itself as they are *constitutive of* it, not merely surrounding it or framing it or contributing to it. They are it (Clarke, 2005 p.71).

A Playback Theater performance begins with a group of actors and musicians stepping out in front of a group of spectators. These spectators soon become story tellers. The performers listen to their story. Some are chosen to play parts in the story; others will discover how they may enhance the enactment. The musicians create a soundscape. Together they take in the story and transform it through their art. When it is over, the actors give the story back to the teller, a ritual returning: giving, sharing, creating, returning. Many stories are shared in this way during the performance. The space
These stories mingle with each other. One story stimulates another in a kind of cross pollination. Often, a red thread can be found linking the themes. Sometimes this is difficult to discern.

As the performance comes toward closure, the audience may be asked to share a picture, an idea, a word—something that remains with them, a memory from the stories that have been shared. The actors create an artistic collage or scene which embodies what has been spoken. This is the image that is carried away from the performance. The acting troupe has offered their skills and interest; the audience has shared stories form their lives, the stories have been transformed with reverence. They have been witnessed. Now they are also our stories.

Chapter I of this thesis is called One Story. I mentioned in that chapter that I was good at writing beginnings or at least liked to write beginnings. Endings are not my forte. I try to avoid them. Nevertheless here we are. Let’s begin some unpacking. Remembering Dorothy Allison’s words from the beginning: These are some of the stories that “I wish you would hear” (Allison, 1995):

The cover identifies the text as a Masters Thesis with the title Constructing the Novel: Teacher Education. Masters thesis implies a substantial work of independent research, and may carry pictures of form and content, depending on where you live or your history of reading academic discourse. This sets the opening scene: academic level, alternative setting in at least two ways- a ‘non-university’ program, and Steiner Pedagogy.

Constructing the Novel is ambiguous. What does it mean? Is it speaking about a book, building a book? Or could “novel” mean something new and different, building something new, perhaps a new kind of Teacher Education. It turns out that all of these are intended meanings including the notion of ambiguity and word play as a theme. Of course this hinges on the reader’s depth of knowledge of English and an interest in playing with words and nuance; and perhaps a tolerance for ambiguity. And questions around the word “constructing” have not even been broached.

The dedication is of a personal nature. It serves to put a human face, a human voice on the writing that will follow. The value of conversation with a loving caring and interested partner is highlighted.

The table of contents indicates the ‘logic’ of the paper. Placed before the acknowledgements following a conserve in Nordic Academic circles but not often seen in American papers. This is the path of exposition that will be followed.

The project is further contextualized in the first area of the acknowledgements section. The nature of the program which ignited the current path of inquiry is noted. The thesis is one of the first set of texts that will publicly represent the academic quality of a first year alternative higher educational program. Cultural challenges begin to come forward. Themes of legitimacy, recognition, academic rigueur, evaluation and censorship are implicit or silent voices (Clarke, 2005). Ideas of expanding boundaries, research agendas, connecting, meeting with larger culture and reflexivity begin to emerge.

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7 I speak as a practitioner of the art. If you would like to read a very good book by one of the creators I recommend Acts of Service by Johnathan Fox.
Next Rudolf Steiner is identified as the impulse behind the program and project. An expanded view of science and research, freeing thinking from prejudice, Spiritual Scientific research, questioning authority, alternative pathways for learning, teaching when asked to teach: responding to the questions that live in the students are all ideas or one might say ‘arguments’ that carry and manifest throughout the paper. There is a brief overview of the Waldorf approach to education.

The Acknowledgements section coupled with the introduction to Steiner and Waldorf Pedagogy serves the purpose of what is sometimes called the Background and Context section of a thesis.

**Leading Images** serve in lieu of traditional Introduction. They are intended to introduce “ways of teaching”, images of “very good” teachers. Have teachers forgotten where the garden is? In **Image I** a teacher enters the garden with the children. He teaches them. They teach him, side by side with curiosity, love, intuition, playfulness, “beginners mind”, fantasy, nature, crossing boundaries, and co-creation. There is gentle questioning of “the art of lecturing” hints that this may not be the best or the only way of teaching, from a fictional gardener and a prolific lecturer!

Working with fiction is first mentioned. There is already a mixing of spiritual cultural streams with Rudolf Steiner mingling with Woodstock era rock musicians. Indications about questioning the status quo and received knowledge should not be overlooked.

**Image II** brings in Christ legends. There are secrets in fairy tales and folk stories. Old Testament ways are viewed next to New Testament ways: the Father God of authority and commandments and the Son God of relationship and the Sermon on the Mount. The robin’s story teaches about learning over time, keeping hope alive, and a connection between head and heart. The importance of the ‘Mother tongue’ makes an entrance.

**Image III** is a picture of the Waldorf approach in action; it illustrates the embodiment of an idea. What was rendered as explicit narrative in the acknowledgements is presented as a scene from the practice setting of a very good teacher who takes care to introduce strict form in a way that keeps the inner life and imagination alive. The teachers’ meditation which was given by Steiner (1919) at the close of the first teacher training course is:

- Imbue thyself with the power of imagination
- Have courage for the truth
- Sharpen thy feeling for responsibility of Soul.

These first pages serve the purpose of an introduction and background. They both introduce and surround and at the same time they are in and of the story. Themes have been presented by means of images not direct exposition.

Poetic imagery enters with the Whitman poem: loosen ties, unknown region, and no path… written at the dawn of the 20th century in America.
Chapter one offers a series of images: stories, the possible human, the clown, the void, to begin with. We find ourselves on the edge, on the verge of something: Life? The stage? A written document? I write something for you to read. You read something I wrote. I and you. Writing is a relationship! We meet in the space of writing!

Chapter one looks at the movement and potentials of the written word, researching writing through writing.

Three agendas are put forth: writing as relationship or dialogue, writing as activity or socially engaged activity, and the problematization of a perceived prevalent scientific or academic writing paradigm.

How are rules made? Who is served by the rules? The importance of cultivating a questioning wakefulness when encountering hierarchies that contain the Us vs. them discourses. Can we live with the ambiguity of problematizing and resist the immediate urge toward problem solving? There is an attempt to step back from the ‘debating society’, to stand in a different paradigm, perhaps this is the void, or perhaps it is Whitman's unknown region and perhaps it is a place that is inhabited by others already: the qualitative research community, fourth genre writers, Rhetoricians for peace, or Critical pedagogues.

The end of Chapter One accents the trans-disciplinary nature of the project and some intertextual relationships are recognized. The themes are reiterated.

Chapter 2... Report on the research process- Writing and writing a novel in an academic environment. A new territory? Not really. Non fiction and academic journals and articles have been my literary home for as long as I can remember. But writing a novel....? This thesis is about learning to write, and it reveals itself nearly immediately as a political project. Why I write? What is writing? Is there always a socio/cultural/ political motivation or agenda only more – or less hidden? The dystopian world view opposes and contrasts with – Ideals of the leading images. Avoiding the mode of debate proves near impossible: What is academic writing and who names it? Can parody as "argument" relax the grip of academic convention if such a grip indeed exists? Is science Truth and fiction? The quote I chose calls fiction or imagination an “escapist” retreat! We are still walking the line... Accommodation or Escape... There are methods available for approaching the void: Active Imagination, Free writing, Critical pedagogy, Fiction, Self reflection...Ways of teaching and writing.

Can we create the novel, a genre that walks this line? One that is present in both worlds? Can the language or voice be understood or accepted? A picture is offered. A group of scholars do advocate other forms of writing; in fact, many of them are working to have them more widely recognized. Possibilities for evaluation or how to read the emerging forms of writing are offered, a readers guide... not only the novel as a separate entity but the whole text of the thesis.

But all I really want to do is... Work in the world: where social science is political activity, the personal is political... The work needs and will find a place of enactment, the classroom, the writing classroom, or critical pedagogy. This all suggests applications of the research or findings.
Throughout these pages, I have caught myself time and again; building the argument in a more or less traditional way: finding support from experts to prop up my point of view, taking the other opinion to the extreme negative pole.

I know one reason. I object to one group pronouncing judgment over another. Where does the power come from? What are the rules? Who makes the rules?
What about those extremes? Anarchy/Totalitarianism; neither of these will work. Incoherent babbling/computer programming; definitely choose the computer program if you want to fly to America or organize a hundred page document. It probably ends up something like this: Extremes are helpful in the right situation. Balance and movement have their special moments.
The question I always return to is, “Can we meet, Eye to eye…”

A meeting of two: eye to eye, face to face,
And when you are near, I will tear your eyes out
And place them instead of mine
And you will tear my eyes out and will place them instead of yours,
Then I will look at you with your eyes
And you will look at me with mine
(Moreno in Hale, 1981).

At the risk of offering a conclusion, a solution or an actual ending, perhaps it would be true to say that after all is said and done I join the Norwegian author Anders Johansen and say that in the end it is all about dialogue…

"Virkeligheten henger
i samtalen slyngte tråd."

Reality is suspended
in the thin thread
of conversation.
Section IV: Patriot Acts
Patriot Acts

I have identified this paper as CAP or “Fourth genre” academic writing. I have elaborated personal, political, artistic, and intellectual motivations and directions for the research. I have claimed the work as academic research in the qualitative research paradigm. I have expressed concern with a foundational, positivist approach to research and writing. This work strives to move away from that paradigm. I welcome criticism as to how well this goal is achieved. My self reflection involves monitoring how well I “Walk my talk.”

Teacher Education, the novel in progress has been presented and analyzed from various perspectives. The analysis illustrates possibilities for utilizing fictional reading and writing as research options. There is a circular or spiral process available with this kind of project. A student/researcher is permitted to move between the realm of the imagination and the analytical world while maintaining awareness and contact with personal feelings and inner movement. It is possible to start from any place within the process or privilege one area over the other. My thesis is that it is also possible to find a meeting place, a genre that supports and recognizes all of these.

Patriot Acts may be considered the conclusion of my research. Remember the initial research questions

How does the written word interact with the world? What is the relationship between reading and writing? How do writing style and form interact with, effect, or create social reality and relationships? What sorts of relationships are created by our forms of Social/ Human science writing?
What are the movements and ideas in current academic writing circles?

This novella is placed purposefully into the world initiating interaction, first, with the academic culture, then with teachers of adult literacy and then with the reading public, particularly adults emerging as readers and writers. My preference would be to bring the work directly to these developing readers, initiate discussion and develop the work further based on the dialogue. This would be a co-created writing and reading endeavor. This is a task to be pursued in the future: involving students, academics, and professional writers in a writing/reading process which culminates in the production and publication of interesting well written texts. “Well written” is a term of negotiation. This is the essence of the task to navigate the social realities, power relationships, writing paradigms, and cultural values. Can all voices be heard? What voices are privileged?

For the newly developing adult reader whether they are new second language learners or native speakers learning to read and write in the “accepted” way carries deep psychological and socio-cultural implications.

There may be inner struggles with mistakes, fears of judgment for not living up to standards, need to acquire technical skills, power imbalances (those possessing specialized knowledge have more power), cultural/religious factors, concept of self worth based on successful ability to assimilate the values and skills of an other, and finally a loud Stop followed by a recognition of the choice to accept the standards on ones own terms. “Yes, I would like to learn to speak the language in a way that allows me to do, say and obtain the things that are important to me.”
Emerging idea:

Write a story for the newly emerging adult reader that is emotionally, critically, politically, and intellectually engaging.

Bernice and all of the librarians in Chester Co. PA. said, “You'll have to write them, no one else is.” (Books for adolescents and adults with low level literacy skills) This just might be the way to accomplish several of my goals for completing this masters thesis: completing a piece of literature with a political, educational emphasis; illustrate writing as a research process; produce a text that may be read and useful outside of the academic setting...

What could we do? We were just a small group of people in a relatively isolated classroom in a residential school for children with developmental disabilities. The school was not even within the main stream for Special education. We represented a “fringe” element called “curative education” based on the Anthroposophical world views taught by Rudolf Steiner and developed in the Campbhill movement and ideas of Dr. Karl Konig. Most of us could not read or write and in fact very few had any noticeable interest in the written word. All of us were interested in the world and what was happening to ourselves and to others. We moved on as the rest of the country moved on. How was the local sports team doing? Which teacher or house parent was going on a trip? What did I have for breakfast? ...the prom, the music assembly, Easter, going home – local and personal news occupied our bi-weekly reports. We all shared that one poignant moment when with Alex’s question we wondered, “Could that be my father, mother, wife, friend in those cars?”

... in the classroom on the day that the US invaded Iraq looking for weapons of mass destruction:
Alec says, “That looks like the road to San Francisco... like the way my dad drives to work”. No, this was a picture in the New York Times and the Philadelphia Inquirer.

... weapons of mass destruction: automobiles excreting toxic gases, creating a greenhouse effect and global warming. Wait a minute, didn’t it say, “The science is still out on the global warming thing”?

The Method

Patriot Acts is a novella written with the emergent adult reader in mind. In Ireland Recently, Patricia Scanlan edited a new line of books for New Island Publishers called the Open Door Series. There is a severe dearth in reading material that is geared to the emotional, social, intellectual needs of adults but written at a reading level accessible to new readers. Scanlan asked accomplished Irish novelists to write a novella that would be appealing to this group of readers. They were given these editorial guidelines:

What are the principle criteria for an Open Door book?
Each Open Door has a well discernible plot or story line. While being limited to 10,000 words, the characters are to be well developed, but there are not be too many of them; the style and language is always simple, with short sentences and more full stops than commas.
Open Door authors are advised to avoid sentences with multiple clauses, to keep vocabulary simple, using common and straightforward words, but to allow the occasional challenging word (where useful). Short chapters are preferred, as this creates the feel and structure of a ‘regular’ novel, while allowing teacher and student easy points of reference. We discovered, as the series developed, that many literacy teachers had problems with the use of expletives, and authors were asked to be considerate in this regard.
Open Door stories relate to the physical and social environment of the reader, and they share common, topical themes, from family to sport, human dilemmas to relationships. The focus, for all the authors, is on accessible, stand-alone stories that give the literacy reader, as much as anybody else, the experience of having taken possession of the tale, not by hearing, or watching, but through the medium of the written word. Unlike its literacy predecessors, there is not the slightest whiff of medicine about Open Door (2007).

The series has been a successful with readers and teachers and offered its sixth series in 2006.

The Story

**Grand son:** Jimmy, 5th grade, 11 yrs. He develops a “pen-pal” relationship, on-line, with an Iraqi boy, who is in school in England. His mother and siblings moved there after his father was killed—on his way to work by US tanks. His father was a doctor, a pediatric oncologist, a cancer doctor for children. Later in the war, after the family moved to England with the boy’s uncle, the hospital was bombed and a lot of the children, his father’s patients were killed. “Collateral damage” is how the American press described it. (George Bush, the president, actually called the killing of children “collateral damage”, a byproduct of war …a negligible incident. By phrasing it as the press described it this way protects the one who actually said the words, Bush himself. He is the one who carries or at least represents those sentiments and beliefs.) What kind of cognitive dissonance happens when a citizen sitting comfortably in their living room hears the president speak these kinds of words?

**Other characters include:** Pop’s son, Frank—Jimmy’s father. He is a social worker at the VA (Veterans Administration) hospital specializing in the treatment of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). He fought in Viet Nam and came home to become a leader in the Veterans Against the War campaign. Pop was proud when Frank enlisted but his anti war activities caused a major rift in the relationship for many years. Healing really started to come about during the year when Mary, Frank’s mother and John’s (Pop) wife was dying of cancer. Jimmy’s birth two years after Mary’s death brought them very close. They like being in each other’s company now.

**Mary** is not physically alive but the three males feel her presence, and Pop actually hears her voice.

**Pop,** eighty year old John Delancey, is the protagonist of this novella. His world-view, belief system, the values that have given meaning to his life are being challenged. Is it possible for him to change? He re-evaluates his life choices. How did he come to his position? What factors influenced him? The story is told in the first person, In Pop’s voice.

The novella is titled **Patriot Acts.** Choices revolved around plays on phrasing that played with The Patriot Act. This act is the Bill enacted into law in response to the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City. The Bill was introduced by the Bush administration and voted on by both houses of congress, many of whom admittedly did not have time to read the entire document prior to voting. How could one not vote to approve something called The Patriot Act? In the name of the “War on Terrorism” the act dismisses civil rights that Americans hold sacred such as privacy and free speech. The renewal and ongoing enforcement of the bill is in active debate now.

Titles considered were **A Patriot Acts, Patriots Acting,** and **The Patriot Acts. Patriot Acts** was chosen to allow for multiple readings like, “these are patriot deeds”, “individuals may speak with voice of dissent and still be patriotic”, or “there are many Patriot Acts” to name a few.
Patriot Acts
Chapter 1  Happy Birthday

I’ve been called Pop for so long now I can’t remember my real name. I’m just kidding. It only seems that way sometimes. Some of you may know what I am talking about! My name is John. Today is the 4th of July, my birthday. I am 80 years old today.

The Good Old Days

What could I do? I was pretty happy. I do get sad when I think about Mary. I miss her every day. I sometimes find myself talking to her when no one else is around. Mostly, I am happy though.

I go to the community center, the senior center by myself. It’s not like home. All the chairs are covered in plastic and the tables remind me of playing bingo. At home I have my big recliner with an old lamp next to it, just right for reading the newspaper or watching the tube. It gets a little lonely though. I like most of the folks at the center. Some of them remember Mary from church. She was always into something there right up to the year she got sick. Those church friends were a big support to her during her illness and to me after she died. I didn’t have to cook for myself for at least a month after her funeral. I cook most days now; not too bad if I may say so myself. Most days I have lunch, at least, at the center and my son and his wife have me over for dinner once or twice a week. That’s my favorite. That’s when I get to hang out with Jimmy. I want to tell you about him. That’s why I started writing this in the first place.

You know, we sit around talking most of the day. We do a lot of different things like playing cards, dancing, and making crafts. I even started to knit. At my age! Imagine that, knitting. Mostly we talk though. Everybody is pretty polite. We try to avoid politics and religion as we’ve been taught to do. The big topics are grandchildren, health problems, and who has died recently. Sometimes we do get a little deep. It often ends up with something like this,

“What’s happening now? What is the world coming to? Young people don’t trust anyone anymore. They have no respect for anyone or anything. Nothing is sacred.

… back when we were young… things were different… back in the good old days…”

I don’t jump on that band wagon anymore; not since this stuff started happening with Jimmy.

I look back over my life sometimes. I remember coming home after the war: marched in all the parades, shook hands with the president when I got my purple heart, went to college for awhile on the GI Bill, met Mary (the main thing!), got my job with the electric company, and got married. I did all of this in two years. My life has been good. I don’t think that I would change any of it, except that I do wish Mary was still here. She would know what to do. I hear her answer,

“Follow your heart, John. Follow your heart.”

“But I trusted, I believed it all Mary.”

“Trust you heart John.”
Now, at my age, I begin to wonder. I'll be eighty on the Fourth of July. I've called my self a patriot for all these years. I belong to the VFW and not just to have a place to drink and watch the games on TV. I serve on several committees; still do. We offer programs and give talks to schools, social clubs, and groups like the boy scouts or at sports banquets. I wear my old uniform and of course the sash with my medal and other ribbons on it. I talk about the flag, democracy, and civic duty. I want to be an involved citizen and I want to encourage others to be active too.

But now, I begin to wonder…

The President on TV

I watched the president on the television the other night. I always watch the State of the Union speech. It was a kind of ritual for Mary and me. I always had to call her in at the last minute as she worked in the kitchen cleaning up and getting things ready for the morning. She didn’t like to wake up to dirty dishes for some reason. I often tried to trick her into leaving them for the morning but sometimes I would hear her down there straightening up as I was falling asleep. Her timing was perfect in the end coming with our snacks just as the last wave of applause died down and the president started to speak. I had a beer and some pretzels and she liked Pepsi and chocolate Tasty-Kakes. I sure did miss that old ritual last night… pretzels, beer, the smell of chocolate, Mary’s smile, and maybe even the nice clean kitchen.

It’s kind of odd watching TV through these bars. Maybe that’s why the president looked and sounded like a cartoon character or one of those old Punch and Judy puppets. See, I am pretty old. I remember Punch and Judy and puppet shows. They were always fighting and arguing. He was always huffing and yelling. Did he hit her with a club? I am talking about the puppets now! Punch’s face was like those caricatures that they draw down the shore on the boardwalk. Do you know what I mean? The face is huge with a fixed silly ugly grimace. The image is all bluster and wind with tiny sticks for arms and legs waving around wildly. Anyway, that’s what the president looked like on the TV reading his speech from the teleprompter. It was kind of like a puppet show with the men in their suits rising up clapping and the president pounding away at his chosen points. I remember being afraid and laughing at the same time when I first saw Punch back in kindergarten. Picture little boys and girls sitting in the dark auditorium and Punch cackling away, “That’s the way to do it…ba…ba…ba…baaaa…” as he pounds on his wife or the devil with his giant stick. “My fellow Americans, I have come to warn you about the ‘Axis of Evil’—baaaaa…” I never took drugs except for arthritis medication but I felt like I had as I watched. It was strange. I wish that I was hallucinating but it was real, I’m afraid.

They keep Fox News on here at the jailhouse all the time, of course. I gave up on Fox after they put Jimmy up there with Osama and Satan. When they suggested that Jimmy was part of some kind of terrorist sleeper cell, I switched to watching Democracy Now and listening to NPR. One of the stories suggested that he had been switched at birth and programmed in some secret way to begin corrupting the public school system after the World Trade towers were destroyed. This was too much science fiction for me. I read Western and Detective books. With them you always know what’s what. The good guys are good and the bad guys are very bad and the good guys always win—end of story. Science fiction creates crazy unpredictable worlds without logic. It’s hard to know what’s true anymore. I guess we live in a kind of “Science Fiction” world now, don’t we?
If it seems like I am wandering from the point, I am a little. I am reluctant to tell the story about Jimmy. I think he is a hero. He is brave and speaks the truth. He has helped me to wake up. I always wanted to be his hero. I think he looks up to me. He says that I taught him about patriotism and love of country. I may have taught him about it but he taught me how to live it. I feel more awake and more “Patriotic” now, sitting alone in this cell than I have in my whole life. Mary, “I did follow my heart.”

“I know John.”

I guess it is time to tell the story.

Chapter 2. Veteran’s Day

Have I mentioned how old Jimmy is? He’s twelve now. He celebrated his birthday just the other day – in the Youth Detention Center downtown in Philly. Yes, we live just outside of Philadelphia: the city of “Brotherly Love”, home of the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. My son Frank, Jimmy’s dad, smuggled a picture in to me. He takes photos secretly with his cell phone when he visits us in our separate jails. Jimmy doesn’t look very well to me. Something about his eyes tells me that his smile doesn’t go as deep as it always has. His parents are only allowed to see him every other week and he can call for ten minutes once a week. The rest of the time the counselors, guards, and other kids can work on him full time. He’s been locked up like that for going on three months now. The rules for youth are very strict. Basically, they have no rights. They can be held for unlimited time. It is the judge’s decision. I’ve only been here 17 days. I tell you that story in a little while if I still have the energy. I haven’t eaten for a long time.

This is how it happened. I think the place to start is last year when I visited Jimmy’s class on Veterans Day. At least they celebrated the day in school. It used to be a holiday with schools closed and a parade. Some children don’t even know what the day is about. I was proud when Jimmy asked me to come in to school for the morning. I wore my uniform with my Purple Heart and the other small ribbons. The children were great. They really listened as I told them about all of the men and women who have served their country in the Armed Forces of the United States. I started including women in my talks a few years ago when a young girl kept reminding me. She even called out, “you mean ‘Her’ story when I said history! I told them about all of the wars and shared my story about being wounded trying to help my friend. He did not make it.

I did not tell them that I had killed two men that day. They were not men really. They looked a lot like friends of mine. We were really just boys. I could see the blonde hair sticking out from under their German helmets. You are the first ones that I have ever told about that. I think about it every day. I see their eyes and remember their hair. If it had been somewhere else I would have gone up and introduced myself but instead I shot one and used my bayonet on the other. I think they would have killed me and the rest of the guys were depending on me.

It looks cold and matter-of-fact when I see those words written down like that. I don’t feel it that way inside. Some part of me hurts and hides. I think Mary must have seen this secret place in my soul. Sometimes in the middle of the night she would wrap me with her arms like a baby. I wondered if I was yelling out or thrashing in the bed. She never said anything, just held me until I fell back to sleep. I have never even talked about it with my son Frank and he talks to Veterans about their war memories every day. I guess he’ll probably find out when he reads this after I’m gone. Sorry Frank.
I’d better be getting back to Veteran’s day. That is when I started to wake up some. I started thinking about all of these things and having all of these feelings.

The talk was winding down when one of the little girls raised her hand. She asked,

“Were little children or kittens killed when you dropped the bomb on Japan?”

That kind of floored me. I had never quite thought about it like that. I remember being pumped up and proud when I heard about it. I was fighting for the most powerful and smartest country in the world. We had done what needed to be done to keep the world safe and the enemy from our shore. I don’t know if I ever put myself into the shoes of a Japanese person, a grandmother, or a child watching her family disappear. I have read stories about shadows of people left on stones after their bodies were vaporized. I guess I never imagined them as real people, but as an evil that needed to be destroyed.

Anyway, the teacher saved me that day. She had all the children stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. My usually booming voice was only a hoarse whisper that morning, barley as loud as the children.

I haven’t slept very well since that day. The nightmares seem too real. I feel Mary’s love reaching out to hold me but comfort does not come. My world has shifted. It used to be a Father Knows Best or The Price is Right kind of world now it is more like Frankenstein or The Twilight Zone.

As I sit here in this cell, slowly starving, the nightmares seem to be easing. I begin to see my life not as an old TV show or horror movie…

Chapter 3. Jimmy’s Story

I wish I could show it to you. It looked professional, like a one page New York Times. The masthead did not say, “All the news that’s fit to print”. Instead it read, “To my Grandfather, who taught me to love my country.” The name was stark and clear: The Patriot.

The Mushroom cloud was the first thing that really struck you when you looked at the paper. It looked so familiar. I must have seen the image a million times but on Jimmy’s paper it looked oddly beautiful and real and evil. It almost spoke or it looked like it would speak at any moment. It seems to be permanently etched in the sky as it is in many of our minds: Hiroshima. It was the first bomb that I knew that had a name: Little boy. Little Boy Ends War is one headline I remember.

The head line over the picture reads Children Die in Blast.

There is a family in the other picture. They are running together almost like they are rushing to catch the next ride at Disney Land. The short stocky father runs with his three children. The gun barrel of the tank that looms behind them points straight at his head. Two of the children wear typical school uniform plaid. The smallest, a little girl, wears a red blouse. Her bottom lip shows stubbornness and anger. She holds back the tears.
This family is on a street in Baghdad. They are on their way to school and work.

There is a small story above this picture in the top right column. The story is very familiar to me.

Collateral Damage

What is the Question?
“Were little children and kittens killed when you dropped the bomb?”
Pop looked a little bit stunned. He stood thinking about an answer. The teacher helped him out.
“Class, let’s give a big hand to Mr. D. Stand and we’ll recite the Pledge.

I, pledge allegiance to
The Flag
Of the United States of America
And to the Republic
For which it stands
One nation under God, indivisible
With liberty and justice for all.

In the left hand column, under the mushroom cloud was this letter from Jimmy’s “pen pal”.

Dear Jimmy,

I’m just getting used to English but this computer helps me to spell in the right way.
My name is Ahmed. I come from Baghdad. My family moved here to London last year. We live with my uncle, my father’s brother. My father was killed driving to work at the hospital a few years ago. You should have seen the car. It had a big hole through it from the missile. He was driving past the US tanks when they fired into the city.
He was a doctor for kids with cancer. We came to London when we heard that his hospital had been accidentally bombed. I knew some of his patients. They were nice. Some of them were just growing their hair back.
I am not sad or angry anymore. My uncle told us that father and the children are in heaven now. I believe him but sometimes I would like him to come home with us again.

I hope we can be friends. Maybe you will want to visit us sometime when we move back to Iraq. Please right (or is it write?) and tell me about your family and friends.
Do you know how to play baseball? I would love to learn, but nobody here really plays.

Your new friend,

Ahmed
This was in a beautiful red, white, and blue scroll across the bottom of the page.

The Bill of Rights

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

I hadn’t read the words in the First Amendment since I memorized them in grade school. They hit me hard that day. I don’t know how Jimmy did it but the message became clear for me. We the people need to stand up and question the government. To say STOP! Wait a minute, something is wrong here. My grandson said it simply and with strength with one page: a few words and two pictures. He is in jail for saying this so clearly.

I asked Frank if he could bring in an old song he used to listen to when he got back from Viet Nam. That was a hard time for us. I didn’t understand what had happened to him. He left so positive and strong. When he came back, he was angry and stayed by himself a lot. He got involved with the hippies and joined the Veterans for Peace. We argued a lot then. Things didn’t get better really until he got married and Jimmy came along. Anyway, he used to play this one song over and over again. I hated it, but now it suddenly came back to me. It goes something like this:

Something’s happening here
What it is ain’t exactly clear

There’s a man with a gun over there
Telling me I’ve got to beware

STOP! children
What’s that sound?
Everybody look what’s goin’ down

Paranoia strikes deep
Into your life it will creep

It starts when you’re always afraid
You step out of line
The man come and take you away

We better stop, hey what’s that sound
every body look what’s goin’ down

Everybody look what’s goin’ down

(Steven Stills)
“I’m turning into some kind of a hippie all of the sudden.”

“I always told you to grow your hair, didn’t I? You would have been so cute!!!”

“Yeah, but then I would have missed all of those Saturday mornings at the Barber shop. And then, when would you have gotten the house cleaning done?”

Chapter 4. What Happened

Jimmy handed the papers out during morning news and current events time in his class and in the schoolyard at recess. Not very long at recess, so I hear. The principal himself came and took Jimmy and the rest of the papers straight to his office. No one had ever seen the man in the schoolyard before, except maybe once during a fire drill. He didn’t grab Jimmy but he crumbled the pile of papers with both hands. He yelled very loudly for one of the other boys to collect all the copies he could find and bring them to the furnace room.

Frank tells me that the principal Bill McIntyre was wild, red faced and very loud in the meeting later that day. He even verbally attacked Frank, calling him a traitor and an old hippie peace freak. Lucky for old Bill that Frank has changed his ways since high school days or he would have been in big trouble. Frank was proud of his son when the principal suspended him on the spot saying loudly:

“A Patriot loves his country!”

Jim stood straight and tall and replied:

“I do love my country and my family. I want my country to be good and loving. How could we do this? Ahmed’s father was killed. Americans killed him. We killed the sick children. Is that alright? Why? How is that good?”

The principal turning purple was barley able to push out these words:

“You are an insolent and disrespectful young man.”

Frank managed to stay cool even then. He stood and walked out of the office with his son.

No further comments or explanations were given. The suspension was effective immediately.

Dinner back at the house was quiet that night. Jimmy gave me a copy that he had printed on special paper just for me. I had it framed. It is at home on the mantle over the fire place next to Mary’s picture. All the military stuff that was there is out in the garage now. I threw it out there the Wednesday I landed in here.

Homeland Security

They came for Jimmy the next morning. Two Philly cops and a man in a brown suit. He was the Homeland Security Guy. They wouldn’t let any of us ride with him, not even his mom. She was pretty upset. We all were. I haven’t seen him since then. Like I said, they are very strict with kids once they get them locked up. I don’t want to scare you but I was really surprised.
The official charge is Copyright Infringement. They say that he illegally downloaded the pictures from the internet. It’s OK for the kids to do that for their school projects. That’s where they learned to do it. The computer companies that gave the computers to the school sent folks in to show them how to do that stuff.

The teacher was pretty upset about the whole thing. She encourages the kids to keep up with the news. She probably would have given Jimmy extra credit for his newspaper project if things hadn’t gone the way they have. She taught a lot about freedom of the press and investigative reporting at the beginning of the year. I think she shares a lot of the same feelings that Jimmy has about Iraq. She was the only one from the school that stopped by the house to offer her support.

The copyright thing, of course is bogus. The real deal is the Homeland Security accusation. They have trumped up the whole terrorist picture like I mentioned before. That sounds a lot like KGB to me. We used to always talk about them. We were always thankful that we didn’t live in Russia. We had privacy and rights. We didn’t need to live in fear of government spies and that kind of thing. Makes you wonder what’s happening, doesn’t it?

The newspapers are having a hey day. A Terrorist with a war decorated grandfather makes good press, I guess. The stories all look a bit like this one:

Local Boy Supports Terrorists

If he was in the service he would be called a “traitor”. An 11 year old boy, Jimmy Delancey, published an “underground” news paper reminiscent of the 60’s and 70’s hippie anti-war propaganda, supporting Osama Bin Laden and his terrorist armies. Using dramatic copyrighted pictures illegally copied from the internet, he made outrageous connections between the war in Iraq and the successful ending of WWII with the dropping of the atomic bomb.

This young man challenges our President’s choice about the invasion of Iraq. What is this country coming to? What kind of civic values are being taught in our schools? Our children forget the meaning of patriotism. They forget the founding fathers intentions. They are taught to question authority.

What is to be done? What has happened to respect for authority and love of country? Is America falling apart?

Chapter 5. My Trip to the Library

I went at nine o’clock to pick up the books that I had asked for at the library. Our little place is a neighborhood branch of the great Free Library of Philadelphia. The inter-library loan system is great.
You request a book on Monday and it is usually there by Wednesday. I went on Wednesday as usual to pick up my books. I like to go early to read the newspapers and magazines. They have papers from all over the country and the world. I look at some of the ones from out west but I enjoy reading the Irish news the best. They have some from the smaller towns near where my mother grew up. I read for awhile to give the librarians a chance to settle in before I bother them about my books.

Patty, a nice young woman, was working that day. She laughed when I called her, “Patty Cake”. You can get a way with teasing a lot more when you get to be my age.

“Hold on Pop, let’s see what we have for you today.”

They all know me at the library. I go there often since I have retired. She opened my page up on the computer screen and her smile froze. She turned a little red and spoke in a more formal tone.

“Just a minute Mr. DeLancey, I have to get Eleanor. I’ll be right back.”

I was baffled. This was the first time there had been any trouble with a book request. I leaned over the counter and looked at the screen while Patty was gone.

Privileges Revoked scrolled across the entire screen. There must be some kind of computer error, I thought. I was expecting two books; one about Gandhi and the other about Martin Luther King. I was returning the ones on Child and Youth Law and on the history of how the military and businesses work together. I checked to make sure that my library card had not expired. It still had another year to go. I waited quietly for Eleanor.

Eleanor must have worked at the library for fifty years. She is probably close to my age. She has always seemed older though. We are not really friends but we have always had pleasant conversations about books or history, always in a hushed whisper. Today, she looked a bit shy. She waved me over to the end of the counter while Patty went to stack books. This was all very mysterious.

But then it dawned on me. Jimmy!

I didn’t hear all of the details, just the words Patriot Act, Homeland Security, and access denied. Eleanor was apologetic and told me I was welcome to read the newspapers but not allowed to take out any books until after the “investigation”. I was stunned and numb.

I wandered around the streets for a few hours trying to figure out what do. I was angry and sad at the same time. I was crying on the inside for Jimmy, for missing Mary, for all our young men and women, for the people in Iraq… I could go on and on. The anger began to win out.

I found my way to my friend Dan’s Used Book store. He is an old friend, and I mean old. We ran on the same West Philly streets before we could even ride a bike. He quit high school to join the army and never went back to school. The same GI bill that helped Mary and I get our first house helped him get a small business loan. He’s been running that store since before there were used books I think.

The store is kind of a community center down there just off South Street. I like it better than the library except for the newspapers. You can sit around and talk in a normal voice and drink free
coffee. Dan keeps the pot going with his special blend. You can’t get any of those fancy Latte’s or Cappawhatchamacallits though. Dan can get you any book that you want. I think he’s the smartest guy I know, even though he never finished high school.

After the Veterans Day experience in Jimmy’s class, he gave me lots to read about the end of WWII. I never knew that so much was going on. It seems that Truman may have gotten really macho and talked tough once the test showed that the bomb would work. We were always told that the bomb was a last resort. It was the only way to stop the Japanese and end the war. It turns out that there were probably many options open. Some of the books say that we did it just for revenge for Pearl Harbor. That was pretty serious for us Americans but when you start to read and look at the pictures of Hiroshima it makes you wonder. And then, Why Nagasaki?

There are a bunch of books that talk about how the government, military, and business all worked together to make the final decision. They say that many of the scientists who had worked on the project were trying to stop the possibility of actually using it. There were others who supported the idea though. I don’t know much about all of that finance stuff, but what I read in Dan’s books sounded pretty convincing. And I’ve never been one to go in for those conspiracy theories either. Neither has Dan. Put all of this together with what has been going on since 9/11: Dick Cheney’s company, our soldiers torturing prisoners, all of the laws being changed without us knowing, the Patriot Act. How can anybody sit still for it! They call little Jimmy a terrorist. They throw him in jail for pointing out the problem. It’s crazy. You’re lucky that I gave up cursing or you’d be reading some pretty fancy words right about now. That’s for sure.

Dan was out at a book fair that Wednesday seventeen days ago. He might have calmed me down some. We may have talked things through. He probably would have given me some more books. In a way, I think I’m glad that he wasn’t in that day.

Anyway… He wasn’t there. The young guy that was working gave me a postcard that Dan had left in case I came by. I was hypnotized by the young man’s tee shirt. It said Visit the Liberty Bell in black and blue letters. The bell was not cracked any more. It looked perfect, almost brand new. Something strange happened when you stared at it for a few minutes. It looked like it was starting to melt. It was melting.

“My friend is in art school. I don’t know how she made it. Pretty cool isn’t it.”

He told me when he saw me gazing at the picture. It made my hair stand on end.

This is the card Dan left for me. His note said, “Sound familiar?”
Chapter 6. Life at the Jail

I had a little discussion with one of the boys here, one of the guards. He was saying,

“You know, George Bush is a regular guy. He’s someone I’d like to have a drink with after work at the local taproom.”

I hear a lot of people saying that. That is the P-R their sending out about Bush these days. I said it a time or two myself, even though I didn’t vote for him. But then, I got to thinking. I told the young guard about my old friend Joe. We were pals when I first started at PECO. We used to hit happy hour or go to the bar after playing ball sometimes. Every time I went out with him we got into a fight. I should say, I pulled him out of one. He was arrogant, loud, opinionated, a real bully. He was my friend but he could be a real “pain in the ass”, as we used to say. Ed, the guard laughed at first. Later, he came back and said,

“I think you really have something there. I talked with my buddies. We all agreed that Bush sounded a lot like your old friend Joe. We decided he’d be no fun to hang out with, but we might like him on the ice hockey team.”

We had a good laugh about that. I think maybe I helped those young cops a little. Maybe they’ll listen to some of those politicians in a different way. That would be nice. Any little bit helps.

I guess I should tell you how I got in here…

Yes, I know that what I did was violent. I destroyed the Eagle. Everything that this Eagle has meant to me—has stood for in this country—is long past. I imagine that I can find pockets of bravery, courage, kindness, and brotherly and sisterly love. I haven’t looked lately. So many people walk around half asleep like I was for most of my life. I lived contented and comfortable. This is

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

It seems that especially in time of war or near-war..., the First Amendment is ignored. You may have noticed that the year 1991 did not start with a celebration of the Bill of Rights, but with a war. And that the government established control over information and the mass media became tongue-tied with patriotic fervor, and the First Amendment was bombed into oblivion. It is a truism of our political culture: if you are at war for freedom and democracy, you can’t have freedom and democracy. So, exactly when free speech is most needed, that is, when it is a matter of life and death for the young people about to be sent to the battlefield-exactly at such a moment the government declares it can be suspended.

Howard Zinn
“the American Way” I said and thought and believed. Some folks were poor. Some were rich. Everyone had what they needed, what they deserved, what they had earned.

I had worked hard, forty-five years at the electric company. I had earned the house and car, my pension. That’s the way it works. Regan had taught us. It’s a “trickle down economy”. “Yes, the rich have lots more, but look how much the poor have now too.”

“I’m sorry, Mary.

“You are a good man, John. You lived in the best way you knew how. You lived the only life you could have lived. We lived the life together trying to figure things out. Now you know more than you did. You’ll do what is right just as you always have.”

“I love you, Mary.”

“I know.”

When I left Dan’s store that day, I felt crazy. I always wondered what being crazy was like. It was not fun. Everything I saw had some kind of special meaning. It was time for me to do something.

I went by the American Civil Liberties Union office but the doors were locked. I found my way to the federal courthouse and walked up the marble stairs. The great wooden hand carved doors were not used anymore so I found the small entrance on the side. I had to take my shoes and coat off to get through the security check. I thought,

“This is like the door at Jimmy’s school. He has to take his shoes off every day just to get into school. They hadn’t checked him for dangerous literature that day. Maybe they will start doing that now.
—Son, I am sorry, No books allowed in here.”

I was not sure what I was going to do. I know this sounds pretty dramatic but like I said I was pretty crazy. I was looking for a way to say something that I had buried for all of my life. Then I saw what I was looking for. The magnificent flag was standing next to the statue of Abraham Lincoln with a beautiful Eagle perched on his lap. (I’m not kidding or exaggerating.) The sight took me over the top. In my state, it looked like Lincoln and the Eagle were fighting back tears, just like the little girl in Jimmy’s picture.

I thought about burning the flag! Me… I almost did it. I fought for this flag… killed for it. I had fought for the ideals that stood behind the flag. I tried to live by those ideals. I taught about them. I even supported all of those proposed amendments against flag burning. These feelings are deep inside of me. And now I stood, looking with my hand on the match pack in my pocket that had somehow made it past the guards.

“Trust your heart, John.”

I must do something—for Jimmy—for the kids—for all of those whose eyes aren’t open…

I smashed the stuffed Eagle. I tore it to shreds, put it in the trashcan and burned it. I watched the smoke rise and swirl around Mr. Lincoln. The flag rippled slightly. I imagined the Eagle spirit freeing
itself as the smoke found the open windows and joined with the gentle winds outside. I have no idea where those kinds of ideas came from. Part of me was fascinated. I felt like I was somebody else.

Why would anyone stuff and mount an Eagle anyway? It must have been done a long time ago before they were an endangered species. Eagles are supposed to fly high and free, soaring with a far sighted view of the world below. This one was stuffed, moldy and dusty, with glass eyes—just sitting there unnoticed by passersby.

There was quite a commotion with the black smoke and stench of one-hundred year old burning eagle feathers. The guards didn’t know what to do first. Should they throw the old man standing staring into the smoke onto the floor and handcuff him or should they put out the fire. They pounded me to the floor as the courtrooms emptied and the alarms sounded.

Now, I sit here in this cell writing and thinking. I get lots of visitors these last few days. The priest comes every afternoon. He tried to get me to change my mind at first, but now he just sits with me for awhile and sometimes we say some prayers. Frank comes in everyday on his way home from work. I think he is sad but I feel his love for me. He understands.

The lawyers, politicians, and doctors started visiting after the story in the Inquirer. No one paid much attention to my arrest at first. For some reason an old Vet damaging the symbols of the democracy was better left out of the news.

Sometimes they offer me Big Macs with fries or a Hershey bar. One of the doctors told me that he would have me committed and force a tube down my throat. The politicians and lawyers play at “good cop/ bad cop”. One will sweet talk me. Then, the next will threaten me or give hints about hurting my family in some way. I have been offered bribes and had the guilt trip laid on me.

“What will the children think? What are you teaching them by acting this way?” , he lectured.

I just smiled at that one.

I shared my cell one night with a nice young man that had gotten a little drunk and found himself in the wrong neighborhood. They brought him in for disorderly conduct. He was perfectly polite to me. He listened with an open heart to my story. It turns out that he was a reporter and managed to get my story into the paper the next week. Since then, I hear public opinion has shifted a little. I saw a group of senior citizens on the news. They were out side of the courthouse marching.

Chapter7  Dreaming

“That sure smells good, Mary. My mouth is watering”.

“Roast Beef and Mashed potatoes, John, that’s your favorite. I finally figured out how to get the gravy right. Will you mash the potatoes?”

“I’ll be in in a minute. I just want to see the end of the News.”

We talked all night it seemed - talked, laughed and ate some delicious food. I’m not really sure that I am really awake now. I must be writing in this notebook but I don’t see the page. I feel strong and
awake inside. There is no mirror here but my eyes feel like Gandhi’s used to look. I never quite knew what he was about but when I saw pictures of him, I felt peaceful somehow. He was so skinny. His eyes looked as though they could see you even though it was just a picture or newsreel at the movies.

“I’m hungry again, Mary.”

“I knew you couldn’t live for long without my cooking.”

“Proud of all the Irish that is in me…”

“Keep on singing, John.”

“When Irish eyes are smiling, all the world seems bright and gay…”

I must have been singing too loud. There’s lots of commotion all of a sudden. Things must go quicker when you get to be my age. It seems to me that Bobby Sands and those other hunger strikers lasted for a long time… I feel some kind of power… standing… with a voice like Martin Luther King… I thought I’d be around for the fireworks one more time at least….

“… Happy Birthday to me… Happy… Birthday…”

Final Chapter  A Letter from a Son

Frank’s Letter

Dear Dad,

A great man died today, starved to death in the land of plenty – the land of opportunity. Your death offers the rest of us the opportunity, a gift of hope. I wish that you were still here. I wish that I could say all of these things to you while looking into your eyes and feeling the calm presence of your body. I missed the chance but I believe that you heard these words, these thoughts as you lay withering away those last few days and that you carry them with you now.

I thought that this would be a political letter. I want to tell the world all that you have done. The world needs to know. You made choices. You acted. You were not collateral damage.

I’ll write that political story another time, dad.

I am glad that you were my father. I would not have chosen anyone else.

Your loving son,

Frank
References


