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Reviews

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REVIEWS

Christensen, Linda. *Reading, Writing, and Rising Up: Teaching About Social Justice and the Power of the Written Word*. Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools, Ltd., 2000.

Nathaniel Teich

Linda Christensen's subtitle, "Teaching About Social Justice and the Power of the Written Word," tells a lot, but does not fully describe the many rich contents of her inspiring and useful book. It contains not only her narrative of teaching at an urban high school including diverse ethnic and minority students, but also her practical teaching units, reflections on the obstacles and outcomes for both her and her students, and many compelling examples of the student writing produced.

The "Rising Up" aspect of her pedagogy should be well received by those of us subscribing to the goals of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning. Christensen states, "I use the term 'rising up' because reading and writing should be emancipatory acts" (vii). Her pedagogy complements the values of care, healing, and transformation that characterize our person-centered approaches.

She offers new and reinvigorated ways to teach with a critical social consciousness—pushing us beyond the stale and strident ideological approaches that have often become divisive in high school and college classrooms, where students as individuals end up being subordinated to abstractions and dogmas.

As a self-styled "social justice educator" (147), Christensen struggled continually to build classroom communities encouraging empathy—in students' personal and public lives, in the literature they read and the essays they write, and in the actual world beyond school. Her care and genuine regard for her students are evident throughout the teaching assignments and personal stories woven into the structure of the book.

Christensen manages this structure well. Her first-person narrative spans the 22 years of her teaching at a magnet arts high school "in the heart of a predominantly working-class African-American neighborhood in Portland, Oregon" (vii). And her narrative structure supports a rich fabric of teaching assignments and examples that can stimulate our own adaptations.

There are stand-alone assignments (such as writing about one's name and origins); there are complete units (such as researching immigration); and there are ways to bring personal and social concerns to poetry instruction. Moreover, the full-size format of this book makes available a number of activity sheets that could be photocopied or used as templates.

In keeping with her commitment to teach reading and writing as transformative acts, Christensen includes a chapter on teaching about the politics of language and a concluding chapter "Untracking English" arguing for quality education for all students. However, her solid, practical teaching strategies and reflections are always part of the fabric of her social commentaries.

Early in her teaching, Christensen realized that "the interplay of race, class,

and gender created a constant background static” in her classroom. Given this condition, “real community is forged out of struggle” as “students haven’t been taught how to talk with each other about these painful matters [. . .] like racism and homophobia” (2).

To become a community, students must learn to live in someone else’s skin, understand the parallels of hurt, struggle, and joy across class and culture lines, and work for change. For that to happen, students need more than an upbeat, supportive teacher; they need a curriculum that encourages them to empathize with others. (2)

Thus, to Christensen, literacy is first “a tool that students could use to know themselves and heal themselves”; then it becomes “a passage into interrogating society” (vii). She asserts:

We need to move beyond sharing and describing our pain to examining why we’re in pain and figuring out how to stop it. [. . .] We must teach students how to “read” not only novels and science texts, but cartoons, politicians, schools, workplaces, welfare offices, and Jenny Craig ads. We need to get students to “read” where and how public money is spent. We need to get students to “read” the inequitable distribution of funds for schools. This is “rising up” reading—reading that challenges, that organizes for a better world. (vii)

Of course, trying to achieve these ideals is the teacher’s on-going struggle. For example, Christensen chose to address directly the fears and attractions of gang violence in the lives of her students. “I couldn’t ignore the toll that the outside world was exacting on my students” (4). However, she insists: “Bringing student issues into the room does not mean giving up teaching the core ideas and skills of the class; it means using the energy of their connections to drive us through the content” (5).

The struggle to build classroom communities takes place outside school, as well as in class. Christensen’s commitment to “letting them know we care enough” meant such things as calling students’ homes at night and giving them time to talk after school (38). This sense of caring and resultant community, in my mind, contrasts with the ill-conceived exploitation of so-called “contact zone” confrontations over controversial issues, in classrooms where genuine community and mutual tolerance are not established.

Christensen describes effective assignments that successfully integrate her empathic strategies and ideals. For example, in a class co-taught with social studies teacher Bill Bigelow, they paired American-born students with ESL students from the many countries in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Each one interviewed and wrote a profile of the partner to share in class: “Students were moved by their partners’ stories. [. . .] Others were appalled at how these [foreign-born] students had been mistreated” (6).

Christensen’s commentaries typically include both generalizations from the specific assignments to their broader implications and particularizations in the form of student quotes or writing samples:

A curriculum of empathy puts students inside the lives of others.

By writing interior monologues, acting out improvisations, taking part in role plays, by creating fiction stories about historical events, students learn to develop understanding about people whose culture, race, gender, or sexual orientation differs from theirs. This is imperfect and potentially dangerous, of course, because sometimes students call forth stereotypes that need to be unpacked.

Things changed for me this year,” Wesley wrote in his end-of-the-year evaluation. “I started respecting my peers. My attitude has changed against homosexuals and whites.” Similarly, Tyrelle wrote, “I learned a lot about my own culture as an African American but also about other people’s cultures. I never knew Asians suffered. When we wrote from different characters in movies and stories I learned how it felt to be like them.” (6)

These two paragraphs illustrate Christensen’s “pedagogy with a purpose” (177), which reflects the heritage of Paulo Freire, Ira Shor, and others in the progressive movement of educational reform for personal and social engagement and liberation. However, the strength of Christensen’s book and practice is her uncompromising practicality. This is most refreshing and useful, in the face of the excesses frequently confronting us in the form of ideological and cultural critiques—excesses of theory that have accumulated and become new orthodoxies in literature and writing classrooms and in academic publications.

Christensen shows us how to open the door and let the actual world into our classrooms—and then how to take ourselves and our students out into that world to make it more just. Her example serves as a timely reminder to AEPL members in particular because our organization often seems deceptively non-political in relation to social justice issues. We should not ignore the implications of our commitment to go beyond traditional disciplines and approaches. Expanding our perspectives need not mean setting our sights on exclusively transcendent realms.

Christensen can teach us to ground our theory and practice in the timely social and political issues that affect us and our students. We can learn from her admirable ethical concerns for respectful understanding of a multi-cultural society.

In the last decade, Christensen has published a body of both creative and scholarly work, including notable articles in *English Journal*, which have been reprinted in several collections, and contributions to *Rethinking Schools* publications. She has become a nationally and internationally recognized leader and speaker for the educational reform movement for social and institutional change. Her work is grounded in rigorous critical scholarship, questioning established assumptions and practices while advocating a responsible agenda for change.

Her success is evident: from the classroom writing and sharing circles, in which she shared her own poetry while encouraging talented minority students to publish their writings in their award-winning literary magazine, to her honor as recipient of the prestigious Fred Hechinger Award from the National Writing Project in 1998. This annual recognition of an outstanding teacher who translates writing research into classroom practice is named in honor of the late *New York Times* education writer, whose values she exemplifies.

True to scholarly and literary value, Christensen's book contains generous selections of creative works from students and professionals, plus adequate bibliographic references and index. Every teacher will gain both ideas and inspiration from this book. If you are unfamiliar with Rethinking Schools, see www.rethinkingschools.org, and order this book on line. ☞

Elbow, Peter. *Everyone Can Write: Essays Toward a Hopeful Theory of Writing And Teaching Writing*. New York: Oxford UP, 2000.

Hepzibah Roskelly

Peter Elbow's writing has always appealed to the general reader. His 1980 book *Writing With Power* remains the only writing textbook I know that students have actually *lent* to their friends for its helpful advice about writing problems and for its welcoming, honest voice. It's not surprising then that Elbow begins his new book, a group of essays written since his last collection *Embracing Contraries*, with a note to general readers about which essays they might find most helpful. Like his other books, Elbow offers encouragement to all writers and hope for any teacher, and his voice strikes the same chords of disarming self-disclosure and friendly engagement that his earlier work has done. Yet, although this is a book for any reader who is interested in writing and language, it's decidedly a book for the profession, a book that argues for the possibility of teaching writing and that asks writers in the field of rhetoric and composition to encourage what he calls "a more welcoming conversation" and "a more inclusive community" (xxiii).

Elbow's insistence on the democratic possibility in teaching writing, that *everyone* can write, and his determined use of words like *hope* and *belief* to describe teachers' work, is no naïve, fuzzy doctrine. In fact, he waylays some of the criticism that has characterized him as romantic or fuzzy by creating voices in the text that argue with his stance, as here: "Peter, why are you so hung up with writing as mystery? [. . .] Why won't you accept writing as a matter of skill, rationality, and craft, rather than as playing God or jumping into the unknown? Not everyone is a romantic you know" (82) Or here: "At the bottom you're seeing everything in terms of *natural* vs. *unnatural*. But natural is a sentimental fuzzy-minded concept. What you call natural is not natural, it's constructed, it's a convention" (230). The critics Elbow dramatizes throughout his essays represent real positions in the profession, of course, and Elbow enacts his belief about academic conversation becoming less adversarial and more capacious by carefully and respectfully addressing objections.

The issues the collection's essays confront will be familiar to readers of Elbow's earlier work—invention, audience, reading, oppositional thinking, voice. Taken as a whole, the book operates as a systematic argument for rethinking the way we conceive of our work as writers and teachers by seeing the contradictions

that beset teachers and writers not as obstacles, but, as Paulo Freire would describe them, as limit situations to be problematized. The book's six sections (which I'll indicate by underlining) each include essays and what Elbow calls "Fragments" developed around a set of issues—from personal writing to evaluation. Each section explores the contradictions and complications embedded in the issue and suggests how to rethink theories by asking new questions of our practices.

This kind of problematizing is one of the things Elbow does best. He thrives on the contradictions embodied in dialectic or opposition, saying in the Introduction that "it might be that the believing game underlies everything else. . . . Yet since I also love doubting, criticism, and logic, binary thinking may lie deeper than the believing game" (3). The first section, Premises and Foundations, establishes the framework for oppositions beginning with Elbow's own experience as a failed writer ("Illiteracy at Oxford and Harvard"), where he speaks of writing as at once both compliance and resistance. The section concludes with "The Uses of Binary Thinking," where Elbow lays out the central premise in the book, that conflict is at the heart of writing and teaching, and that writers and teachers should, and can, hold conflicting ideas in their heads at one time. "My deeper goal in this essay," he says, "is not to preserve pairs or binaries in themselves so much as *to get away from simple, single truth*: to have situations of balance, irresolution, nonclosure, nonconsensus, nonwinning" (51). How to use the tension productively, to change our minds, to believe two or twenty ideas about private and public discourse, research and teaching, responding and evaluating—and the host of other dichotomies the profession wrestles with—becomes the subject of the following four sections of the book.

In The Generative Dimension, Elbow meditates on invention, on freewriting and audience awareness, and on the form and content dichotomy. In Part III, Speech, Writing and Voice, the essays propose varying definitions and attitudes toward voice, a concept that has intrigued Elbow throughout all his work. In "The Shifting Relationships between Speech and Writing," for example, Elbow proposes that writers and teachers turn on its head the traditional idea of speech as ephemeral and writing as indelible as a way to recover voice in writing. In an essay on "Silence," he speaks of the uses of the body and of silence in discourse. "Silence and felt sense. The foundation of verbal meaning often lies in the silence of what is felt nonverbally and bodily" (176). Discourses reflects on academic writing, on the relationships between reading and writing—with some useful, provocative advice on how to teach reading in a writing class—and on expressive discourse in academic writing.

The last section, Teaching, confronts some of the most common and most difficult dilemmas teachers face: in valuing dialect speech, "Inviting the Mother Tongue," in responding to texts, "High Stakes and Low Stakes in Assigning and Responding to Writing," and in evaluating writing, "Getting Along Without Grades—and Getting Along With Them Too" and "Starting the Portfolio Experiment at SUNY Stony Brook." The essays on teaching, and the Fragments that follow them, offer tentative, *possible* solutions to some of the complexities of teaching and learning in the writing class. I liked especially the "mini-lessons" Elbow offers in some of the essays and his attention to the multicultural dimen-

sions of our work with language in “Inviting the Mother Tongue.” I wished that in this essay Elbow had chosen to discuss the gendered implications of his title, or the way that feminist thinkers like Ursula LeGuin and Gail Griffin have used the term “mother tongue” to argue for an expansion in the way we approach discourse.

Like the pragmatists Peirce, James, and Dewey, Elbow is determined to see the strength of an idea reside in its consequences, determined to resist doctrine, to embrace difference and possibility. There’s an open-hearted generosity about his writing and his strategies for teaching that encourages real conversation, that welcomes new thinking, that allows for hope. Elbow may invite readers to play the doubting game, but it’s the believing game that he really wants us to win. □

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Farmer, Frank. *Saying and Silence: Listening to Composition with Bakhtin*. Logan, UT: Utah State UP, 2001.

Emily Nye

This collection of essays by Frank Farmer uses the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin to explore the rhetoric of silence. Farmer frames his work on Bakhtin’s ideas that “the relationship between saying and silence is hardly one of uncomplicated opposition” (3). These essays shed light on this complicated opposition.

This timely topic is illustrated in contemporary culture as we struggle to understand the meaning not just of what is said, but what is left out of news stories, popular culture, and art (to name a few). As teachers we may wonder how to deal with our students’ silences or how to interpret the use (or misuse) of silence expressed between colleagues and administrators. Farmer applies Bakhtin “to help in the project of interpreting silences, naming them, and encouraging all silences to speak in ways that are freely chosen, not enforced” (4). Farmer approaches this “project” by explaining several of Bakhtin’s theories, and along with the works of other contemporary rhetorical theorists, exploring the issue of silence and what it means in the writing classroom.

In the past I found Bakhtin’s work to be dense and somewhat inaccessible. Farmer is able to explain Bakhtin’s work clearly and help us see its meaning within the context of writing pedagogy. In each chapter, Farmer poses some rhetorical predicament (such as writing for an audience in Chapter Two or using imitation as a pedagogical tool in Chapter Four), and he then applies the work of contemporary composition or rhetorical theories to explain and complicate his ideas.

While some of Farmer's essays stress theory, to his credit he is able to tie Bakhtin's ideas back to the composition classroom. An example is how Farmer explicates Bakhtin's idea of the superaddressee in Chapter One. Farmer explains the superaddressee's role as an invisible, third listener in every conversation (the first ear is presumably the author, while the second ear is the person directly addressed). Farmer argues that the superaddressee is alive and well in our students' texts. If we are unable to hear what our students are trying to say, they become frustrated. They either "turn away from us as potentially responsive addressees of any sort and thus abandon any notion that what they write *for* us would be meaningful *to* us, or they would seek out other contexts for writing wherein some meaningful response might still be possible" (29).

This interpretation gives me a way to make sense of something I've experienced in my writing classroom. Often a student seeks me out to serve as what Bakhtin would call a "sympathetic third party [. . .] beyond the one defined by our pedagogical role in the institution" (29-30). I recognize the telltale signs when a student hands in an assignment that is slightly or seriously off the topic. In either case, I am forced to examine not just what the student wrote, but what she didn't write, and why. When I contact the student and ask about the assignment, our conversations often reveal the frustration Farmer describes. My role as superaddressee enables the student to articulate what she needs to say, even if it isn't the assignment. I don't mind playing this role when I believe it helps my students to develop intellectually (and on other levels). However, I acknowledge that sometimes it is inappropriate when students make personal disclosures.

Another idea I found helpful was Farmer's explanation of "Aesopianism" in a writing classroom. This term refers to a tumultuous period in Russian history (1917-1940) when the Russian intelligentsia could not directly address social and political ideas, so they developed allegorical strategies for communication. Bakhtin himself experienced this Aesopian dilemma of not being able to write or express himself the way he wanted. This concept of writing "in disguise" is certainly evident in writing classrooms today. Farmer illustrates with an example from his own classroom. Bakhtinian theory helps him make sense of his interactions with Devlyn, a student who challenged Farmer's authority. Devlyn refused to simply regurgitate class material. Farmer poses an interesting discussion of the use of voice in student writing. Bakhtin would ask us to locate Devlyn's voice within the larger chorus of voices. Bakhtin would also ask us to examine Devlyn's voice and notice how it is changing, and has changed, and to listen for other voices that might be located within "the single voice we ascribe to Devlyn" (54).

Voice is a continuing theme in this collection of essays. According to Bakhtin, voice and selfhood are inexorably linked. Voice is not a finished entity, but an unfinished project, a process "whose origins reside in particular social moments, institutions, and dialogues" (55). He looks at developmental, rhetorical, and historical aspects of voice. He draws not just on Bakhtin, but on Lev Vygotsky's work on voice as internalized social dialogue.

Farmer suggests that when we expose our students to unfamiliar voices, we help them imagine a different worldview. He encourages us to nurture this "dialogic consciousness," or the exchange of voices in dialogue, the challenges of making our voices our own (68). Not only should students learn to listen to voices,

but also they should learn to answer these voices through dialogue journals. He suggests assignments that have students use (or stake a position in opposition to) other voices. Farmer, and Bahktin, would have us help our students see that there is no single true voice, but rather a chorus of voices.

One point I disagree with is the publisher's promotional blurb on the book's back cover. It defines the book's audience as general scholars, specialists, and also advanced composition students. While the book is accessible, I would qualify the third audience as graduate students. Several of the chapters wax philosophical; Farmer presumes membership in the community of rhetorical scholars who discuss and interpret Bahktin. Farmer freely throws in mention of theorists like Charles Taylor, Richard Rorty, and Bernard Donals. This book is decidedly not for novices. I recommend *Saying and Silence* as an ideal text for a graduate seminar in Bahktin and his applications to writing pedagogy, along with reading Bahktin's original works.

This book's strength is its attempt to explain Bahktin while creating a praxis of relevant classroom application. When one reads Bahktin alone, there is the danger of abstracting his (already abstract) ideas and losing their connection to our work as teachers and writers. Farmer guides us through Bahktin while showing us how this Russian philosopher struggled to be heard and understood in a politically turbulent time in his country. Farmer helps us see the parallels between these struggles and our students' attempts to be heard and understood in our classrooms, not just through what they say, but what they don't. ☹

Finkel, Donald L. *Teaching With Your Mouth Shut*. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman Boynton/Cook, 2000.

Dennis Young

I like to talk. I like to profess, hold forth, elaborate, illustrate; I like to dazzle students with verbal acrobatics, well-rehearsed ideas, studied lucidity. I know better, but like many teachers my insecurity arises in the face of silence and lack of control. I was lucky enough to read Donald Finkel's *Teaching With Your Mouth Shut* in the middle of the semester, a time when I usually need some sort of inspiration or spur to invigorate my classes. Finkel helped me to stop the chatter, reminding me to reflect once again on the premises behind the Pedagogy of Telling that surreptitiously grips my teacher's psyche. He reminded me of what I thought I already knew: "Yes, I realize I talk way too much, robbing students of vital dialogue. I need to relax my vocal chords and let students pursue ideas without fear of my vigilant voice. Live with uncertainty, let students be." This "simple" realization, so hard to admit, was validated as I continued to read the book. To change my pedagogical practices means I have to change my *style of consciousness* as a teacher. What makes this book worthwhile is its elaboration of ways to

enact authentically such a radical, enviable, and often difficult to achieve pedagogical style.

Teaching With Your Mouth Shut constitutes a valuable lesson and model for beginning teachers learning their craft; it speaks as well to experienced teachers who want to revise their classroom practices with ideas to shape their teaching lives. More importantly, it's a lesson to help us honor students' abilities to engage in learning among themselves in a carefully considered environment. This book resonates with rich and lively examples of student writing, assignments, course descriptions, reading/writing schedules, and specific teaching ideas—all theoretically framed. This is not, however, merely a "how-to" book. Socrates, Plato, Rousseau, Dewey, Piaget, A. S. Neill, and to a lesser extent Friere are present throughout, sometimes explicitly; Finkel's pedagogy rests on their *romantic* shoulders. I prefer to call it romantic (as opposed to progressive) because the word suggests a constellation of ideas concerning human nature, psyche, education, and democracy. This tradition holds these truths to be self-evident:

- people who want to learn are naturally curious about the world and ideas;
- real ideas cannot truly be communicated but only experienced first-hand;
- only by wrestling with problems and thinking in a dialogical way can learning be made real;
- only by seeking and finding out for oneself can one truly learn.

One could easily add others to this list, but the main point here is that the real work of learning goes on when students talk and write among themselves in the presence of a teacher who does not *directly* tell them how to proceed or what to do.

This is also a pedagogy of resistance. Finkel aligns himself with a tradition of resistance to pedagogy as usual, the kind most of us are all too familiar with: teacher knows, teacher tells; student is deficient, student listens. This book is as much about saying no as it is about anything else we do as teachers. But saying no does not imply a renunciation; it does not mean that teachers relinquish responsibility. Responsibility, power, and authority are re-figured and reconsidered. Such teaching does not mean that anything goes and that the teacher sits back to let students wander wherever they may. Refusing to "teach," far from being irresponsible, means that teachers refuse to answer questions for students, refuse to tell them what to do; it means acting indirectly, posing questions, starting a discussion, relating stories. It means "to create a situation where [the student] will be able to make the best decision for herself" (132). In one chapter, Finkel takes enormous pains to show how a structured sequence of questions shapes learning environments. The *question* becomes the teacher's real work. After questions, silence achieves new status and becomes the art of teaching. Finkel keeps reminding us do not take charge, do not redirect students away from their own struggles with the questions at hand and the present interests that drive their imaginations. Just say no to the Pedagogy of Telling.

Saying no, however, to decades of the Pedagogy of Telling which furnishes the teaching ethos of higher education (and has so for years, despite experiments in collaborative learning) is easier said than done. Here's where Finkel shines.

Specific examples appear throughout, and the theoretical framework comes to life when Finkel illustrates his own “conceptual workshops.” Hands-on learning, he insists, does not mean one has to drag in blocks, props, and computer software. Students learn concepts and ideas, gain insights and perspective by grappling with highly complex texts in the company of other grapplers. This approach takes as its task the opening up of the hermeneutic dimension of learning in its full scope. Assertions are understood as answers to questions and ideas that arise in response to another.

My favorite example is *In Search of Socrates*, a course devised by Finkel that focuses on Plato’s early Socratic dialogues where Socrates’ famous maieutic pedagogy is set forth. The teacher as “midwife,” one who helps give birth to new ideas by questioning, probing, and discussing, constitutes one archetypal method behind Finkel’s “open-ended seminar.” Learning through inquiry, sometimes perilous, potentially chaotic, also leads to the unpredictable, perhaps the biggest payoff. Like Donald Murray’s insistence on writing as surprise, Finkel’s entire pedagogy may be called “learning as surprise.” Surprise of course goes both ways: “A teacher must always be ready to be surprised” (42). This “Copernican shift” in classroom consciousness means that authority and the center of attention no longer resides in the teacher, the person-who-is-supposed-to-know. The intellectual work falls on students engaged in specific tasks concerning a text or problem in order to attain improvisational, not final, answers to open-ended questions. The teacher’s work? Thoughtfully sequencing increasingly sophisticated questions and letting students proceed with a minimum of teacher intervention. This *improvisational* teaching style implies that there is no *providential* authority that always knows the answers from the start, no god-like over-seer of truth.

This may all sound somewhat familiar, especially to those who employ collaborative learning techniques, but I found the ideas here pushed me to new thinking about the purpose and strategy behind my own attempts to engage students in such learning. Although students already work in groups in my classes, I immediately lifted teaching ideas from this book and employed them, especially the “open-ended seminar,” a highly sophisticated series of questions intended to engage students in dialogue for a lengthy period of time. To create such a seminar required me to rethink texts by developing a careful sequence of questions to help guide students to deeper understanding. The hardest part, I must confess, was keeping my mouth shut and standing ready for students; this teacher de-centering is the key to a successful seminar. The irony of the de-centered class, however, is that the teacher assumes even more power by remaining silent. By refusing to be the center of attention, the teacher becomes the “object of special interest” (130) when she does speak, the few uttered words attaining significant weight and import, becoming harder to ignore. So choosing when to speak and what to say has added weight and depth. The less we teach by telling, the more students learn; the less we speak, the more we say. This sounds like a variation of Socratic irony—he is wisest who know he knows nothing, that is, who remains continually open to the ongoing dialogue of learning.

To paraphrase Socrates, “The unreflective classroom is not worth having.” Finkel tells us in the last chapter, “I have written this book to raise questions, to

widen horizons, and to stimulate reflection on our culture's cherished conceptions of 'great teachers' and 'great teaching'" (160). Following John Dewey, this book posits that "education is not an affair of 'telling'" (157); and even though most of us would likely acknowledge this truth, how often is it practiced?

You may be guessing that there is an agenda behind this style of teaching: the challenge is to "help shape students' characters toward one that will be competent to participate in a democratic community (especially a democratic community of inquiry)" (117). Character development to initiate democratic participation as thoughtful, questioning, intelligent citizens is, Finkel reminds us, the ultimate goal of education in a democratic society. To foster a democracy that is reflective and deliberate, rather than simply a marketplace of competing interest groups, a democracy that genuinely takes thought for the common good, we must produce citizens who have the Socratic capacity to reason about their beliefs. To unmask prejudice and to secure justice, we need questioning and argument, essential tools of civic freedom. So teaching with your mouth shut is in the end not just a faddish attempt at new-age pedagogy, but is at bottom a radical attempt to engage in thoughtful intellectual citizenship that sustains democracy.

Teaching, then, goes far beyond the walls of the classroom, potentially touching lives and engendering profound citizenship. I'll end by keeping my mouth shut and allowing Donald Finkel the last word about his book: "In the end, the title phrase will, I hope, turn your head sufficiently so that not only will your notion of good teaching be transformed, but so, too, will your sense of what may be signified by the word *teaching* itself" (10). ☹