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Patricia Cranton and Ellen Carusetta  
*Adult Education Quarterly* 2004; 55; 5  
DOI: 10.1177/0741713604268894

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# PERSPECTIVES ON AUTHENTICITY IN TEACHING

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*The authors work with 22 educators from a variety of disciplines during a 3-year time span to understand what authentic teaching means and to explore how authenticity is manifested in practice. Using a grounded theory approach, the authors interview participants twice per year, observe their classes, and hold focus groups at the end of the project. Data interpretation reveals five dimensions of authenticity: self-awareness, awareness of others, relationships with learners, awareness of context, and a critically reflective approach to practice. Following grounded theory guidelines, the authors develop a model that incorporates the categories generated from the data and generate tentative hypotheses about practice.*

**Keywords:** *transformative learning; authenticity; individuation; grounded theory*

**Faculty members who are reflecting on** and cultivating their teaching skills are adult learners engaged in developmental and potentially transformative activities. The faculty member looking for advice on teaching usually turns to standard resources: the how-to literature directed either to a general higher education audience or to a specific discipline, faculty development center consultation and workshops, or discipline-specific conferences on teaching. These resources serve faculty well, but they have one common flaw: They most often provide principles, guidelines, strategies, and best practices without taking into consideration individual teachers' personalities, preferences, values, and ways of being in the world—the ways in which they are authentic. The assumption underlying this approach is

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ADULT EDUCATION QUARTERLY, Vol. 55 No. 1, November 2004 5-22

DOI: 10.1177/0741713604268894

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that what works well for one teacher in one context works well in general for all teachers in all contexts. This has resulted in a collective, a community of practice, in which we expect to be able to find the best way of teaching regardless of who we are as individuals. When we bring our sense of self into our teaching, or in other words, work toward becoming authentic, we are able to critically question that which is right for us from the literature, develop our own personal style, and thereby communicate with students and others in a genuine way.

Faculty development is very much an adult education enterprise (Cranton, 1996), although it is not situated in this arena as often as it could be. Rather than treat faculty members' learning about teaching as the acquisition of technical skills, we need to draw on what we know about how adults learn, develop, and transform in general and take this into increasing our understanding of how teachers in higher education learn about their practice.

We undertook a 3-year research project in which we worked with 22 faculty members from a variety of disciplines to understand authenticity in teaching. In this article, we describe our rationale for undertaking the study, the methodology we used to work with faculty, and the themes that arose from our interpretation of interviews with faculty and observations of their teaching.

## BACKGROUND

Our curiosity about authenticity in teaching began with an interest in transformative learning theory. We reasoned that if knowledge about teaching is primarily communicative in nature and therefore socially constructed by a community of practitioners and scholars, then we learn about teaching through experience, reflection on experience, and dialogue with others. The value placed on reflection about teaching is apparent in the literature (Brookfield, 1995; Schön, 1983). Perspectives on teaching are an expression of personal beliefs and values related to teaching that are often formed through careful reflection (Pratt, 1998). Critical reflection is the central process in transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000), and it is likely that much of our important learning about teaching is transformative in nature (Cranton, 1996). When we critically reflect on social norms about teaching, and disengage ourselves from the norms we do not accept, we are differentiating ourselves from the collective of teachers, and this is the development of authenticity—knowing who you are as separate from (and the same as) the collective of humanity. In Jungian terms, this is also known as individuation (Dirkx, 2000; Sharp, 1995).

### *Transformative Learning*

Transformative learning is a process by which previously uncritically assimilated assumptions, beliefs, values, and perspectives are questioned and thereby become more open, permeable, and better validated (Mezirow, 2000). People make

meaning out of the world through experiences. What happens once, they expect to happen again. Through this process, people develop habits of mind or a frame of reference for understanding the world, much of which is uncritically assimilated. When a person encounters something unexpected, he or she either rejects the new information or begins to question the previously held assumptions.

Most new faculty receive no formal teacher training; they uncritically absorb techniques, strategies, and styles from their own prior experiences as students and from their colleagues and the norms of the academic community. Through experience and reflection on that experience, they come to find their own way; they transform their habits of mind about teaching. For this kind of learning about teaching to take place, faculty must be critical of the academic community collective. They need to be able to challenge the way things are done and have always been done. They need to differentiate their own thoughts and values from those of the community within which they work, which is a part of developing authenticity.

### *Authenticity*

This takes us to the concept of authenticity in teaching. Authenticity is a multifaceted concept that includes at least four parts: being genuine, showing consistency between values and actions, relating to others in such a way as to encourage their authenticity, and living a critical life. We discuss each briefly.

Cranton (2001) defined authenticity as the expression of the genuine self in the community and presented a process by which teachers in higher education come to know themselves and their preferences within the social context of their work. She described teaching as a specialized form of communication that has learning as its goal and pointed out that meaningful communication rests on the premise that those involved are speaking genuinely and honestly rather than with an intent to manipulate or deceive. To be able to express the genuine self, people need to know who that self is. The development of self-awareness is a transformative process (Mezirow, 2000).

Generally, adult educators have proposed that being an authentic teacher includes making sure our behaviors are congruent with our words (Brookfield, 1990; Ray & Anderson, 2000) and admitting we do not have all the answers and can make mistakes. Palmer (2000) saw this as knowing our limitations. Brookfield (1997) balanced credibility and authenticity; educators should practice what they preach and be sure not to espouse one way of working and then behave in a different way in their own teaching.

Jarvis (1992) suggested people are being authentic when they choose to act so as to “foster the growth and development of each other’s being” (p. 113). Jarvis saw this as an experimental and creative act where teachers consciously have the goal of helping another person develop. In other words, teachers and students learn together through dialogue, as Freire (1972) advocated; the result of authentic teaching is that “teachers learn and grow together with their students” (Jarvis, 1992, p.

114). As we know from Buber's (1961) work, it is only through relationships with others that authenticity can be fostered. For educators to be open to this way of seeing their practice requires a questioning and perhaps rejection of some expectations and assumptions about what teaching is—a transformative process.

Jarvis (1992) also proposed that authenticity is linked with reflective learning. People need to develop as autonomous and rational individuals within their social context. When people's actions are "controlled by others and their performance is repetitive and ritualistic" (Jarvis, 1992, pp. 115-116), they are inauthentic. Heidegger (1962) saw authenticity as involving critical participation in life. By critical participation, he meant we question how we are different from the community and live accordingly; we neither do something just because it is the way others behave nor believe what others believe without considering whether it is true for us. Critical reflection or critical participation in life is central to transformative learning. And this is also a good way of understanding authenticity—we need to know who we are and what we believe and then act on that. However, this does not mean that we make such decisions in isolation. Authenticity involves knowing and understanding the collective and carefully, critically determining how we are different from and the same as that collective. Sharp (1995) suggested the first fruit of consciously developing as an authentic person is the "segregation of the individual from the undifferentiated and unconscious herd" (p. 48). Thinking along parallel lines, Freire (1972) argued that authenticity comes through having a critical knowledge of the context within which we work and seeing the principal contradictions of that society. To be authentic, the educator is bold, dares to take risks, and recognizes that he or she will not always win over the people.

How are faculty authentic in their teaching? How do they separate themselves from the norms of their department and institution and find their own unique style? How do they learn about teaching from resources that tend to standardize practice?

## RESEARCH GOAL

It was our intent in this research to explore authenticity in teaching by working with faculty during a 3-year period. Extending the research over time allowed us to observe how faculty developed and transformed their perspectives on teaching, in part as a natural consequence of their experience and in part as a product of interacting with the research team on a regular basis (see Cranton & Carusetta, in press, for a detailed description of the developmental component of the research). In this article, we describe how faculty members understand authenticity in teaching and how they see it manifested in their practice.

## METHOD

Within the interpretive research paradigm, we chose a grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Tesch, 1990) to approach our research goals.

Grounded theory is appropriate when working in an area where little theory has been developed, and it is especially useful in applied professional fields where the major purpose of the research is to improve professional practice through gaining a better understanding of it (Darkenwald, 1980). Grounded theory research relies on the investigator as a primary instrument of data collection and uses inductive field-work rather than deductive approaches. The primary outcome of grounded theory research is a set of categories along with a description of the properties of those categories. Tentative hypotheses are then formulated regarding the relationships among categories and properties. The results provide a conceptual tool that guides practice.

### *Participants*

During a 3-year period, 23 faculty members from three university campuses in the Maritime provinces of Canada participated in the study. One individual dropped out of the study early on due to illness. Participants were selected primarily through nominations from colleagues and administrators. We described the research project and asked people to suggest names of authentic teachers. We specifically asked for new and experienced faculty. We deliberately did not provide any criteria for the nomination of participants because we wanted to work out the meaning of the concept from the participants' perspectives. Forty names were suggested, several by more than one person; we sent these individuals a description of the project and invited them to participate. Most participants saw themselves as authentic teachers, but many also had questions about the meaning of authenticity and were unsure of the extent to which they acted authentically.

Participants came from the following disciplines: administration (business), philosophy, computer science, education, forestry, kinesiology, nursing, English, biology, psychology, botany, classics, and economics. There were 13 female and 9 male faculty members. Given that nursing and education departments (where there are more women faculty than men) were involved, the proportion of women and men in the group was fairly representative of the universities' population. We had hoped to have about one half of the participants be new faculty, but it proved difficult to find new faculty who felt they had the time to devote to the project. Of the participants, 7 were new faculty members in their 1st or 2nd year of teaching, although some of these individuals had prior part-time experience, and 15 were experienced teachers. Of the 15 experienced faculty members, 3 could be considered senior scholars, and 5 were award-winning teachers.

### *Researchers*

Our team consisted of three faculty members in adult education and three graduate student assistants. The leader had 25 years experience as a faculty member and had worked in faculty development for most of those years. Of the other two

members, one had 11 years of professorial experience at the onset of the project, and the other was a recently retired professor of adult education with 14 years of professorial experience. All three researchers have studied and written about teaching and learning throughout their careers. The three graduate student assistants involved in the project were all working toward M.Ed. degrees in adult education and integrated their participation in the project with their graduate work.

### *Interviews, Observations, and Focus Groups*

Our goal was to interview each participant once per academic term for the first 2 years (a total of four interviews) and to conduct at least one observation of teaching per year. For the most part, other than a few participants who took a sabbatical leave during the project, we were able to follow this schedule. In the 3rd year, we brought tentative results back to faculty and held focus group discussions with 4 to 6 participants in each group.

All interviews were conducted by at least two members of the research team, most often one researcher and one graduate assistant. The interviews were held in participant's offices, were tape-recorded, and tended to last from 1 to 1.5 hours. The initial interview focused on the individual's story of how he or she came to be a teacher, what he or she liked and disliked about teaching, and some specific questions which we thought might be related to authenticity at that time (e.g., how people bring themselves into the classroom, how they relate to students, how they perceive institutional constraints to teaching). The interviews varied greatly in content; we strove to maintain an informal conversational style and therefore, the faculty members' interests led the dialogue in different directions. In subsequent interviews, we worked with very general guidelines. Mainly, we reread the transcript from the previous interview prior to the meeting and followed up on issues of interest from that conversation. We deliberately did not predetermine interview questions. In a grounded theory methodology, an inductive approach is used. We did not know what we were looking for in advance of the study; we let the data from the participants lead us. By the second term of the 2nd year, we felt we had few questions remaining. The conversations were beginning to repeat themselves, saturation had been reached, and we decided to stop interviewing at that point.

All interviews were transcribed by members of the research team as soon as possible after the interview (usually within 2 or 3 weeks) and returned to the faculty member by e-mail. Most participants did not comment on the content of the interview, but many expressed surprise at how their speech looked in written form. A few faculty added additional thoughts and returned an amended transcript to us. We had only one tape recorder failure during the interviews. That person graciously offered to be reinterviewed.

We did not carry out observations during the first term of the project. We wanted to establish a good relationship with each participant before we took the potentially threatening step of attending his or her classes. By the second term of the 1st year,

everyone felt comfortable with one or two of us observing their classes, although some of the newer faculty members especially expressed some nervousness. We observed each person's teaching at least twice. Usually two members, but sometimes only one member of the research team, participated in each observation. We did not attempt to tape-record or videotape the classroom events. Instead, each observer took extensive notes on the happenings in the class. We did not enter into the classrooms looking for specific behaviors. We simply wanted to get to know this particular teacher and how he or she was in the classroom. To this end, we included observations on such things as a description of the physical facilities, how the teacher placed himself or herself in the room, details as to the teaching methods used, the degree of interaction with students, the nature of student questions and discussion, and any other observations that seemed relevant to us. Our observation notes were transcribed and sent to the faculty member as soon after the observation as possible, usually within 1 or 2 weeks. The newer faculty tended to view the observations as a good way of receiving feedback on their teaching, and they would ask us specific questions about methods they were using in class.

The majority of the classes we observed were at the undergraduate level and in traditional face-to-face settings; however, we saw one graduate-level seminar and two classes that used audioconferencing. Class sizes ranged from about 8 students to more than 100, with a typical class size being approximately 35 or 40 students.

In the second term of the 2nd year, we deliberately arranged interviews to follow directly after classroom observations so that the researchers could discuss that specific class and their observations on that class with the teacher while the event was fresh in everyone's mind.

Focus groups were arranged in the first term of the 3rd year of the project. We composed the focus groups so as to ensure that any participants from the same department were not involved in the same focus group in case faculty felt reluctant to speak openly, especially about institutional constraints, in front of their peers. Otherwise, the groups were formed randomly. There were five groups, each with 4 to 6 participants. Although some participants knew who some other people in the project were, there had been no organized interaction among individuals up until this time. Because one of the researchers was at another university at this time, some of the meetings were held in a room that allowed teleconferencing. At least one investigator and one graduate assistant were present at each focus group meeting. The conversations were tape-recorded and transcribed by the lead researcher. Each meeting lasted from 1 to 1.5 hours. The transcripts were returned to participants as soon as possible after the meetings.

As focus groups are intended to concentrate on specific areas of interest, we used seven general guiding questions that were developed based on preliminary data analysis. They were related to self-awareness, relationships with students, learning environments, being inauthentic, power, critical reflection, and changes in practice.

### *Data Interpretation*

The interview and observation transcripts were interpreted each term by at least two research team members who then met to discuss their results. We treated data from the interviews and observations in the same way; that is, we worked directly with the written transcripts and focused on a search for categories. The specific techniques used to delineate categories varied somewhat among the researchers, but they consisted primarily of highlighting, taking notes, and coding sections of the transcripts. The constant comparison method recommended by Glaser and Strauss (1967) was followed loosely. The data interpretation from each term fed into the interview conversations the following term. For example, when power was selected as a category, we would then ask participants to give us their thoughts on how they exercise power in the next round of interviews. However, this was not done in a systematic way, as we preferred to let the participating faculty determine the direction of the dialogue.

At the end of the 2nd year of the project, we had 15 categories. Following the procedures from grounded theory methodology, we continued to collapse categories to reach a higher level of abstraction but still maintain groupings that would be practical and meaningful for educators. Using an inductive approach, we did not rely on existing literature but rather, worked from our data. However, because we were well versed in the literature and because the researchers are primary agents in data interpretation in this approach, we were influenced to some extent by our knowledge of the field. When we were satisfied with the categories, we generated tentative hypotheses as suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967), which could then be used in practice. At that time, we also examined how our interpretation fit with existing literature on authenticity and transformative learning.

## RESULTS

We generated five categories, which then served to direct further analysis: self, other, relationship, context, and critical reflection. In Table 1, we present the categories, descriptions of the meaning of the categories, and properties or characteristics of the categories. For each category, we then present representative quotes from the data. Pseudonyms are used to protect the identity of the participants.

### *Self*

In a variety of ways, faculty members spoke about their awareness of themselves as people and as teachers, how they came to be a teacher, what that meant for them, their values, their passions, the conflicts they experienced between the realities of teaching and their values, and the ways in which they brought themselves as people into their practice. Without entering into the debate about unitary and nonunitary models of the self (Clark, 1999), we accept that some participants in the study

**TABLE 1**  
**Authenticity Categories and Properties of Categories**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Property</i>
Self	Possessing an understanding of oneself both as a teacher and as a person	Self-awareness Articulates values Congruence between values and actions Genuine Open Explicit Articulates teaching story Brings self into classroom Shows passion for teaching Knows preferred teaching style Sees teaching as a vocation
Other	Possessing an awareness of others as human beings in the teaching and learning environment, especially students, but sometimes colleagues and individuals outside of the classroom	Awareness of students' needs and characteristics; for example, learning style, motivation, abilities and gifts, prior experience, developmental stages Interest in students' lives and needs outside of the classroom, including personal problems and obstacles to learning Interest in other individuals who may be a part of teaching—colleagues and the methods they use
Relationship	Possessing an awareness of the relationship between teacher and students Carefully defined relationship between teacher and students	Caring for students Helping students learn Dialogue Sharing self with students Awareness of how power is exercised Teaching as relationship and communication Awareness of nature of personal relationship with students
Context	Possessing an awareness of how the context of teaching influences self, other, and relationship	Knowledge of discipline, subject area, content of teaching Awareness of classroom environment Departmental norms and expectations Institutional norms and expectations, including promotion and tenure policies Cultural expectations, role of professor in larger culture
Critical reflection	Being critical of or engaging in critical reflection on each of the previous categories—self, other, relationship, and context	Critically questioning one's own values, preferences, and experiences Critically reflecting on the meaning of student needs and characteristics Critically questioning one's relationship with students Critically examining the influence of context on teaching Critically questioning the norms and expectations present in the teaching context

meant a core, authentic self in the humanistic sense, whereas others saw themselves as being shaped by context and had multiple ways of seeing themselves.

In talking about self-awareness, participants said,

I have made a conscious decision that I am not going to be a superstar, and I am going to do what I really believe is right. (Cathy, experienced faculty member, science)

You might have a natural inclination or talent, but it's not automatic, you have to work at it, and just be conscious about it. (William, new faculty member, business).

That kind of goes with my personality. I think I'm pretty outgoing, I think I'm relatively friendly and relatively understanding, I guess, and people always seem, that's why they stop by, because they feel comfortable doing it. (David, experienced faculty member, applied science)

Teaching was a passion for many. They spoke of it as a calling or a vocation, as something that gave meaning to their life:

I was in a coma from this horrible disease for a while and I really believe I came back to teach. . . . This is what life is all about. (Cathy, experienced faculty member, science)

What I want to say is that it is me as a teacher. Me, as a teacher, and not somebody else as a teacher. But then I guess the follow up question to that would be, "Well then, who else would it be, if it wasn't you?" But I guess it's that part of me. I love what I do. I love teaching. I love teaching people education. I love working with students. (Loretta, new faculty member, education)

I find that teachers tend not to fragment their lives, that is, it's a more integrative life where teaching is seen as a vocation. (Jocelyn, experienced faculty member, nursing)

Bringing one's sense of self into the classroom was important to almost all participants:

I guess that my conception of it is taking your self, your real self, not just your professional self into the classroom. . . . It seems somewhat natural to be who I am in the classroom. (Seamus, new faculty member, economics)

They see me with all my foibles, my disorganization, which I work hard at to overcome. . . . I am much more willing to just be who I am and let them see who they are. (Thomas, new faculty member, humanities)

I do bring myself as a mom sometimes, you know, talk about my kids . . . most moms are teachers, so I do bring myself to class, definitely. I don't check it at the door and become the instructor. I mean, the instructor is me, and I'm not two different people. (Loretta, new faculty member, education)

Everyone had stories to tell about how they became who they are as teachers, including stories about individuals who helped shape their perspectives:

I think that I may even try to model myself after him. We used to call him Bio Bob. He was a really good person. I think the best. . . . He was incredible. You could really see the effort he was putting into the students. (Al, new faculty member, sciences)

### *Other*

Faculty showed a strong interest in and awareness of their students' characteristics, needs, and learning styles. Some participants also were aware of and concerned with students' personal problems and lives outside of the classroom, but others saw this as falling outside of their practice. Participants sometimes demonstrated an interest in the characteristics of colleagues or other individuals who touched on their teaching but were not actually in their classrooms.

In this category we were looking specifically at an awareness of other people, not necessarily how that awareness influenced their relationship with learners, although the implication is, of course, that the knowledge informs the relationship.

This group is . . . feels technologically inadequate and doesn't really feel very safe trying that sort of stuff yet, and in fact, even just using the computer to search things at the library. (Pamela, new faculty member, nursing)

And some of them come with lots of enthusiasm and excitement, they're keen, and others are there because they really think they need a degree to keep their jobs or change, well, maybe to change shift work for day work. (Henry, new faculty member, computer science)

A lot of the time, they're afraid to speak up, and if it's a kind of group effort, . . . this course, I should say, more so than my other courses, it takes them 2 months to warm up to each other. (Stephanie, experienced faculty member, psychology)

Perceptions of students were not always complimentary. For example,

I don't like rudeness. I have had a few students in a number of circumstances, and they are just plain rude. They are disappointed in their mark. You explain it to them. You go over it. They are angry. (William, new faculty member, business)

### *Relationship*

By far the largest category had to do with the relationship between teacher and student. This category was broadly defined to include helping students learn, caring for students, engaging in dialogue, and being aware of exercising power. Faculty talked about the nature of their relationships with students, ranging from quite personal to fairly distant. Many project participants struggled with where the boundary of their relationships should be, especially in light of their responsibilities for evaluation and grading. That being said, it was evident that each person had carefully defined the parameters of his or her relationship with students that suited the participant's own way of being. There was discussion of how open faculty should be

about their own lives in their interactions with students. Underlying many of our conversations was an intense and powerful sense of caring about students and their learning. This category also included some references to relationships with others—sharing thoughts and feelings about teaching with colleagues, friends, and spouses.

These are some examples of comments that characterize the depth of relationships and the concerns faculty had about boundaries:

You have to be present for them. The other thing, it never stops because once somebody has opened up to you like that, they trust you, and if you pass them in the hallway and don't say hello that is not good. You have to be present all the time. (Lee, experienced faculty member, business)

They trail along in a little line, mamma duck and her baby ducks. I get a real charge out of it. The thing that I sort of wonder about is the mamma image. It must be the whole motherhood thing. (Cathy, experienced faculty member, sciences)

Because, I do want to get to know my students. But I don't want to get to know them as I would want to get to know a friend. So I mean, if I felt a student was "crossing a line" or something, then I may put on a professor role, which in retrospect may contradict some of the things I said before. (Thomas, new faculty member, humanities)

Sometimes I think that the students can become too much, too important in your life . . . it is like you don't have anything else in your life other than students. That gets a little scary for me. (Karen, new faculty member, humanities)

As researchers, we were interested in the possibility that an educator's perceived power would inhibit authentic relationships with students, but although we asked all participants about this, their reactions indicate that they either exercised power in a productive way or did not see it as much of an issue. Again, the only area of concern centered on evaluation. Most would happily have abdicated that responsibility:

I find the fact that I'm in a position of authority in the classroom makes the discussion more useful . . . you can say things and people will actually listen and sort of say, "Oh yeah, I hadn't thought about that, OK, well, hmmm. . . ." I find when power is lacking, I don't think that happens. (Gary, experienced faculty member, English)

I guess that I don't consider myself to have to be powerful. Someone who can influence someone's life so dramatically. I do realize that it is a form of power, but I think in the grand scheme of things, it is relatively small. (Henry, new faculty member, computer science)

Being involved in relationships with others outside of the classroom was important to many participants. This allowed them to maintain an integration of teaching and personal life, something they associated with being authentic:

My husband's a . . . teacher as well, so we bounce stuff off of one another quite a bit. . . . And then, of course, friends who are teachers, between the two of us, we have a bank

of friends that are teachers . . . and we talk about teaching. (Loretta, new faculty member, education)

I have colleagues that I talk with. [We] talk a lot about teaching. What I find is that after being here a year and now moving into the 2nd year, I feel that I am beginning to develop some relationships to people to talk with. (Alison, new faculty member, applied sciences)

### *Context*

The context within which faculty members work influences their perceptions of themselves, their students, and their relationships with students. Context consists of several levels: the content of the teaching, the discipline or subject area, the physical classroom including the size of the class and the room arrangement, the psychological environment within the learning group, the department in which people work and its norms and expectations, institutional norms and policies, and finally, the general community or culture and the roles people expect faculty to maintain. All of these contextual levels were mentioned by our project participants, but the emphasis was more often on content, classroom and class size, and departmental issues than on the norms and expectations existing in the larger social context.

Comments on content and subject area tended to be very specific:

It's a difficult class because of the topic. Death and dying is a very hard topic, and it's, the class went fine, but I think they were . . . there wasn't as much interaction as there typically might be. (Stephanie, experienced faculty member, psychology)

I think if someone is teaching something highly technical, I think it would be harder to be authentic in a class like that. (Terry, experienced faculty member, forestry)

Class size and the physical classroom were issues that some faculty felt interfered with how they could teach:

We've done it where we've actually gone out of the room. You know, taken different groups and just looked for other space, even in the hallway, whatever. . . . This one time, a group went outside, got a smoke break, while they hashed it over. It's more than anything else I guess the class size and the physical infrastructure I've found to be a little bit difficult. (William, new faculty member, business)

The learning environment was important to most faculty. Typically, they worked to create a comfortable atmosphere:

One thing, I guess, that what I try to do is have a relaxed atmosphere in the class, which I think produces a learning environment, making people feel comfortable and being able to ask some questions. (Scott, new faculty member, social sciences)

Our discussions with faculty yielded primarily positive comments about their departmental contexts in terms of the support they felt for being who they were and

teaching in a way that suited their preferences. At the broader institutional level, people expressed some of the usual conflict between teaching and research responsibilities:

The thing that's nice about this faculty is they do value teaching, and I think the dean expected there would be more balance within individuals. . . . We have balance within the faculty . . . top-notch researchers and top-notch teachers. (Terry, experienced faculty member, forestry)

Teaching your courses and getting your research going, and so forth. Once I get through a certain hoop, then I'll probably be more adventuresome. . . . Yeah, the committee work and the research and the students doesn't leave a lot of time. (Thomas, new faculty member, philosophy)

In many of our conversations, there was a subtle sense of what is expected of university faculty in general in the larger community, but this was not often articulated explicitly. In this example,

It's being yourself and not trying to fulfill a role of what people might traditionally think of as a teacher or a great sage or some sort of that kind of image. (Alex, experienced faculty member, humanities)

### *Critical Reflection*

Critical reflection was a strong theme throughout our conversations with faculty. The phrase *critical reflection* comes with difficulties. Many faculty used the word *reflection* and there was a strong sense that people were critical of or questioning themselves, others, and social norms. However, critical reflection implies an analytical, rational, and judgmental process, and this was not always what participants meant. At times, they were relaying feelings, and at other times a hunch, intuition, or an insight from practice. Critical self-reflection and critical reflection on faculty relationships with their students were the most common, but participants also reflected on student characteristics and the context of their teaching:

Actually, on the evaluations they have some piece of paper where you could write comments. I always read them, and sometimes I say, well, they write that you act like a robot, and you have to think "Do you really act like a robot?" You have to think about that. (Susan, experienced faculty member, education)

I can think that I am doing so great. I am such a great teacher and the students are going, ah, I hope that he retires soon. . . . It is not easy. It's a difficult thing. You just have to be constantly aware of what is happening. (Alex, new faculty member, philosophy)

Do they have a real objection or are they just upset about something else? I reflect on the class. . . . At the beginning I talked way too fast, and then all of a sudden, half of the students were gone. I thought, oops, that really shouldn't have happened, so next time. . . . (William, new faculty member, business)

I do a lot of thinking about my teaching. . . . You know, sometimes it takes that outside observer or outside individual. That spark. You're like, "Oh I never even thought about that." (Loretta, new faculty member, education)

I get depressed sometimes when I tell other teachers, "How are your classes going?" if I'm having a rough semester or something, and I go, "Oh, it's going really well this semester," and I'll think, "Oh boy, what am I doing wrong?" I feel pressure, I feel very uncomfortable if I get a sense that people aren't finding this enlightening or they're not finding this useful or comprehensible or whatever, if there's a major problem like that, it really disturbs me. That's what I find most true for me. (Thomas, new faculty member, philosophy)

### DISCUSSION OF TENTATIVE HYPOTHESES

In grounded theory research, the researcher offers tentative hypotheses that integrate the diverse elements of practice and form a theory to guide practice. The goal is to provide information that is sufficiently generalized and yet still yields a "meaningful picture . . . that enables one to grasp the reference in terms of one's own experience" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 38). To this end, we developed a simple model (see Figure 1) that incorporates the categories generated from our data, and from that model and the properties of the categories as presented in Table 1, we suggest hypotheses for practice.

Within the category of self, we can propose that a person who has a good understanding of herself or himself, as both a teacher and a person, is more likely to articulate values, demonstrate congruence between values and actions, and be genuine and open. This teacher is also more likely to bring himself or herself as a person into the classroom, be passionate about teaching, know his or her preferred teaching style, and see teaching as a vocation. We can hypothesize that together, these characteristics are likely to lead the teacher to show authenticity in teaching. We do not want to suggest that authenticity is an on-off phenomenon, that a person possesses it or not, but rather that it is an ongoing developmental process of becoming more authentic. Therefore, we would hypothesize that as an individual develops self-awareness, which continues for the course of a career, authenticity also develops. The developmental aspect of our research is discussed more fully in Cranton and Carusetta (in press).

Similarly, within the category of other, we propose that a person who articulates a good awareness of others as human beings is more likely to understand students' needs and characteristics (personality, motivation, developmental stage, and so forth). He or she is also more likely to be interested in students' lives and needs outside of the classroom, although this characteristic also varies depending on individuals' values and beliefs about the role of teacher. It seems that this awareness extends to others outside of the classroom—colleagues, friends, and family members—with whom the teacher can exchange ideas and experiences about teaching. We hypothesize that a person who articulates a good awareness of others as human

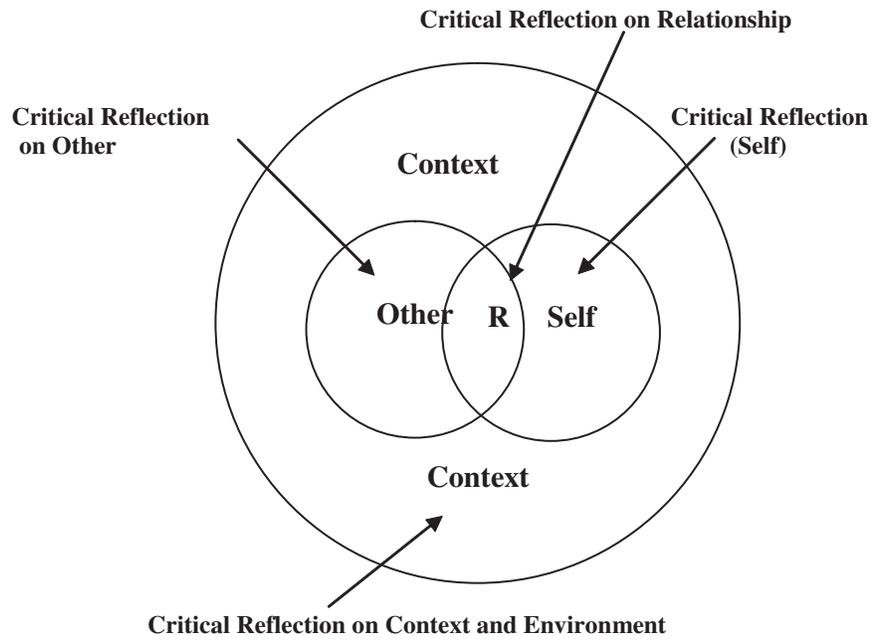


Figure 1. Model of Authenticity in Teaching

beings is more likely to show authenticity in teaching and that as this awareness develops, so does authenticity.

The category of relationship yields another set of tentative hypotheses. A person who is more aware of relationships between teacher and student is more likely to care for students, be concerned with helping them to learn, and engage in dialogue with students. He or she is more likely to share aspects of the self with students, be conscious of how power is exercised, and have considered the degree of personal connection with students that is comfortable. These characteristics describe authenticity in teaching. And here, we would add that the relationship includes fostering students' authenticity.

In relation to context, a person who has an awareness of the context of teaching will be more likely to see how the subject area, the classroom environment, the departmental and institutional norms, and cultural expectations influence the teacher, the students, and their relationship. He or she will be more likely to see how he or she is in tune with and different from the social norms of that context and express this as authenticity.

Finally, in the critical reflection category, we hypothesize that a teacher who engages in critical reflection on self, other, relationships, and context is more likely

to be working toward becoming authentic. He or she is critical of, or at least not unconsciously accepting of, all components of teaching and learning.

Although our findings and tentative hypotheses are not completely congruent with the literature, the associations are clear. In transformative learning theory, individuals critically question assumptions, values, and perspectives that had been previously unconsciously assimilated. Jarvis (1992), Heidegger (1962), and Freire (1972) all related authenticity to being critical and hence, to transformative learning, although this connection is not explicit. We do not mean critical reflection to be judgmental but rather, we see it as the open, questioning, mindful consideration of how we think about ourselves and our teaching. Nevertheless, the centrality of the process we have tentatively labeled *critical reflection* is in tune with its importance in both transformative learning and some conceptualizations of authenticity.

That a sense of self is integral to authenticity is obvious. Cranton (2001) and Brookfield (1997) both defined *authenticity* in terms of a genuine presentation of self and congruence between values and actions. Palmer (2000) believed that “our deepest calling is to grow into our authentic self, whether or not it conforms to some image of who we *ought* to be” and that “true vocation joins self and service” (p. 16).

Participants in our research were clear that self-awareness plays a key role in their teaching and their relationships with students. Jarvis (1992) and Freire (1972) both saw authenticity as concerned not only with the self but also and perhaps most important, with how we relate to students. We cannot be authentic in teaching and ignore or not care about students, for that is what teaching is—helping others to learn. There were probably more conversations with faculty in our project about their relationships with students than any other topic.

The context of teaching is not often addressed in the scant literature on authenticity. Cranton (2001) suggested that teaching is a social process that takes place in a context, and Jarvis (1992) was aware of the paradox between adapting to and becoming a conforming member of society and becoming an individual in that society. Palmer (2000) referred to context in terms of limitations that can inhibit our authenticity. He saw these as “imposed by people or political forces hell-bent on keeping us ‘in our places’” (p. 42). When our project participants talked about context, they more often talked about the classroom itself or the context of their discipline or subject area. Departmental and institutional contexts were referred to either in terms of the support they received from others or sometimes, the conflicts they felt between the various aspects of academic work. It was not often that the faculty in our study commented on the broader social and cultural expectations of university faculty.

We hope that the tentative hypotheses we have raised here about authenticity in teaching will both guide practice and suggest areas for research, development, and theorizing. Authenticity in teaching has been a relatively neglected area of study. It is more common for people to look for standardized principles of effective practice than it is for them to turn inward and examine how it is that they as social human beings and individuals can develop their own way in the world of teaching.

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