



## CHAPTER 8

# Not Tolerating Intolerance

## Unpacking Critical Pedagogy in Classrooms and Conferences

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*We'd been on the lookout for conferences focusing on critical perspectives for several months and were excited to see a few come across our Listservs and social media feeds. Finally, conferences with "our people." No need to explain what critical pedagogy or critical theory is. Better yet, no justifications necessary. "Revolutionary critical pedagogy—is about as discernible on today's educational horizon as a mote of dust in a dust storm," Peter McLaren said,<sup>1</sup> and it's hard to argue with him.<sup>2</sup> But these conferences were among a handful of hopeful spaces where we could see all those motes coming together. At last, we could present our work and learn from others who shared our critical perspectives passion. What we didn't expect was a lack of critical reflection....<sup>3</sup>*

If academic disciplines, subfields, and their conferences can be considered loosely affiliated communities, it is with enormous trepidation that we critique our own. These professional communities with an interest in critical theories and pedagogies are ones we most closely identify with, are inspired by, and in many ways strive to contribute to and emulate. Having said that, we couldn't easily ignore the loud, unsettling refrain, revealing an intolerance of dissent, that emerged in multiple critical scholarship conference spaces following the 2016 US presidential election. That intolerant refrain repeatedly accused "others," mainly those who don't believe what "we" do, of intolerance, without any hint of irony. A resolute conviction that "we" are right accompanied it. Even more disconcerting for us as educators was that "our" communities, the same ones that always seemed to ask the hard critical questions, now routinely dismissed questions and stifled conversations that interrogated critical pedagogy, especially as it related to the subject of

student engagement. And maybe these communities have been doing this longer than we observed, but it seems as though the election and the resulting political climate certainly exacerbated this phenomenon.

In this chapter, we draw attention to what we perceive as blinders on some critical pedagogical educators, particularly the contrast between the genuine care toward students apparent in the writings of Freire and hooks on the one hand, and the disdain toward conservative students within the critical information literacy (CIL) and critical media literacy (CML) communities on the other.<sup>4</sup>

Although critical pedagogies has many definitions, Lather noted that it “emerged in the 1980s as a sort of ‘big tent’ for those in education who were invested in doing academic work toward social justice.”<sup>5</sup> Darder, Torres, and Baltodano defined critical pedagogy as embracing “a dialectical view of knowledge that functions to unmask the connections between objective knowledge and the cultural norms, values and standards of the society at large.”<sup>6</sup> Figuring out how to integrate critical pedagogy into our classroom brought into sharp focus the challenges of translating theory into practice, especially in an educational milieu with ideologically diverse students, and over time, we began to recognize the evasive strategies and tactics students used in order to avoid engaging in direct conversations on any number of controversial issues in the class. From faking agreement and doing whatever is necessary to obtain the desired grade—what Wills, Brewster, and Nowak termed “inauthentic learning experiences”<sup>7</sup>—other students remained quiet rather than disagree with us as instructors. As we learned about our students’ backgrounds, we realized that our approach had the potential to shut them down when conversations became overtly political. Many were reluctant to “out” themselves as conservative. We hoped that critical-focused conferences would offer discussion and insights on various approaches and strategies to help us navigate our classroom environments more effectively.

We reflect on our four-year research and teaching collaborative project across two fields—media literacy (located primarily in communications and media studies) and information literacy (library and information science)—and draw on our classroom experiences to highlight some of the challenges faced when teaching students from a wide range of class and political backgrounds.<sup>8</sup> We also examine the ways in which our own collaborative coteaching impacted our understandings of the viability of critical pedagogies, which seem to be increasingly and unabashedly framed in terms of dictatorial classroom practices, including educators just telling students the “right” way to think about any number of issues while simultaneously advocating critical thinking. At a time when many have commented on the increased polarization both in the country generally and in academia,<sup>8</sup> we discuss experiences of insularity and incivility in the classroom as well as in academic conference spaces and offer some alternative pedagogical approaches that

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\* At the time of this teaching collaboration, we were both at the same institution (Blackburn College).

could be utilized in both places. It is our intent to give voice to concerns, such as the challenges of integrating critical pedagogy into classroom spaces where students are unfamiliar with, and sometimes resistant to, its principles. How do other educators do this in their classroom spaces, what strategies (apart from easy authoritarian approaches) work, and how are different types of student audiences considered? We believe other educators in our communities share these concerns, but they may have been (or witnessed colleagues) marginalized or silenced for raising them. And although we don't have all the answers to these questions, we would like to see more discussion on these topics in critical conference settings.

## Incivility and Insularity at Professional Conferences

*We'd been Twitter following some of the presenters for a while and were excited to not only have the chance to hear them present in person, but also potentially talk to them. Many of their works helped shape our understanding of the critical pedagogy connections between media literacy and information literacy, including issues of social justice. And while we ended up having plenty of pleasant networking and conversational opportunities, things turned out different than expected when at the end of their presentation, a prestigious panel opened up the floor to audience questions....<sup>9</sup>*

### 2017 Conference

*Colleague to prestigious panel: How do you get students excited by social justice issues? Think it is less obvious how to do this at institutions with sizeable rural, conservative student populations.*

*Prestigious panel: You don't give students a choice in the matter. Social justice is not an option. Next question.*

A similar experience took place in another conference environment very supportive of critical pedagogical approaches in the classroom....

### 2018 Conference

*Educator: It is our job to teach students "the right way" [explicitly liberal ideology with no room for compromise].*

*General murmurs of agreement and nodding from a majority of vocal attendees.*

*Natasha's response: Is there a "right way," and isn't this a bit more challenging when students have ideological oppositional viewpoints?*

*Resounding disagreement from a majority of vocal attendees.*

Obviously, we are not suggesting everyone at these conferences agreed with the vocal majority, but we left these sessions thinking, "What world are these educators living in?" A world where they don't have to entertain how this could best be done with an ideologically diverse student body? We do not work at elite institu-

tions, with predominantly liberal student bodies, and struggle to incorporate and reconcile critical approaches with the realities of a small, rural, liberal arts–based institution. In fall 2016, Trump won the mock election (before the “real” version) at our college. Most of our students work more than one job, most are from working class backgrounds, and many are first generation. Plenty are under enormous financial pressures, and too many struggle with imposter syndrome. These students’ lives are complicated. That they will walk into a classroom where a teacher tells them everything they know and believe is just part of some neoliberal agenda is not a successful pedagogical strategy.

Unaddressed questions are hardly an unusual conference occurrence, but in both of the cases cited above, educators, by dismissing audience questions, revealed and ignored their own privilege and failed to appreciate when their own views become hegemonic. An opportunity was missed to help educators struggling with the complex reality of working in ideologically diverse spaces, while trying to figure out how to successfully implement critical pedagogy. The glib responses fail to consider that many educators do not have the privilege of being so explicit with their own beliefs and ideologies in the classroom without serious repercussions from administrators and colleagues, as well as students.<sup>10</sup> If we are to incorporate more critical pedagogy to the classroom, surely we must also be reflective of our own privilege, power, and bias and recognize the potential negative impact these can have on students.

We expected these types of difficult and complex issues to be embraced rather than loudly disparaged or ignored at these types of conferences. The refusal to adopt a critical lens to our own critical pedagogies is ironic and frustrating. And the contemptuous reactions are damaging the already tiny critical communities, as otherwise supportive educators recognize the irony, experience similar frustrations, and decide not to attend future conferences.

At the 2018 conference referred to above, we learned from one educator (whose work we admire and respect) that students in their program must agree with social justice principles before they are admitted. This was both shocking and revealing. And we subsequently realized, we are dealing with very different student populations and educational environments. The “who is more left-wing?” game is another unfortunate side effect of critical conferences. Even if one has working class roots, the mere fact of attending one of these conferences and the status of an overwhelming majority of attendees make authentic proletariat alliances remote. The palpable general condescension toward other groups, especially conservatives, and the righteousness of “our” own positions (see conference examples above) ensure blinders stay in place.

Intolerance in these conference spaces is in some ways entirely predictable and even understandable, fueled in large part by the anger, outrage, and surprise (for many) at Trump’s rise to power. Critical conference community spaces offer much needed solidarity, support, refuge, and respite—where justifications regard-

ing the importance of critical theories and pedagogies are unnecessary—and one’s very presence, even if marginalized or silenced, is perceived as evidence enough of common ideological allegiances. Yet where does empathy for all our students enter the conversation? In a provocative article in *The Guardian*, Zoe Williams argued that a side effect of what she called “unmediated fury” is that it “gates off all other, less exhilarating responses, such as empathy.”<sup>11</sup> Isn’t that something “we” typically accuse the “other” side of? But perhaps a defensive culture is inevitable in these spaces, as CIL and CML have long been marginalized within their larger fields, representing a mere blip on the LIS and media and communications studies radars respectively, although arguably this is less so in the last few years.

## Creating Civility in Collaborative Classrooms

Our conference observations might be easily written off as isolated incidents had we experienced them individually. But together, crossing regularly between two typically siloed fields provided an uncommon lens with which to recognize overlapping concerns and themes in CIL and CML.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, these experiences would not have happened if we had not already embarked on collaborative teaching, which pushed us to understand each other’s areas and what we valued (especially the critical aspects) about them. Collaboration also forced us to reevaluate our own authority and power in the classroom. From that experience, we had to reconsider the ways in which critical pedagogy disrupts and challenges authority and power. And yet, at these conferences, we witnessed prominent researchers and practitioners in CIL and MIL offer authoritarian and banking styles of teaching that seemed to run counter to founding critical pedagogy texts. In our own class, we did not want to adopt this approach.

We piloted and cotaught a media and information literacy class in spring 2016. As the course and the concurrent research project developed, both became progressively critical. Thanks to key critical information literacy proponents, including Eamon Tewell, Emily Drabinski, Alana Kumbier, and Maria Accardi, we found a critical perspective convergence between both of our teaching interests and one that dovetailed in bringing together media literacy and information literacy. Thus began a more purposeful collaboration, and one that recognized the equity each area had to offer to our work. We started to speak the same language and came to understand that it was the critical pedagogy that served as the link in our collaboration and between CIL and CML.

At the same time, both of us were increasingly influenced by various critical pedagogy writings and struggled to figure out how to integrate those types of practices into the classroom. At the most fundamental level, we knew that often traditional lecturing led to banking or transmissional models,<sup>13</sup> and we agreed

that the goal was to move away from the type of approach that we had been inculcated with as students ourselves.

## Natasha

*When I first started thinking about the connections between media and information literacy, I never planned or anticipated wading so deeply into each other's areas. I figured, "This is Spencer's realm," and vice versa. Whatever I need to know about information literacy, he will share with me. Over time, this changed. We gradually became more immersed in each other's disciplines—from reading articles, then books, to more immersive practices such as attending conferences. There is nothing like being the only media studies prof at a library conference or librarian at a communications conference to provide instant perspective. Once time, money, thought, and interest are invested, this also impacts the psychology of how you approach things. A genuine, deep interest emerged.*

## Spencer

*We had to read foundational texts and articles, not only on media literacy and information literacy, but also on critical theory and pedagogy. Once we had figured out that it was the critical piece that enhanced our collaboration, we found a greater respect for each other's areas. We learned their roots and how far things had come, and not only from a US perspective. We were learning alongside one another, which better served our partnership, and in turn this impacted our students, who we hoped would engage in a participatory learning environment, despite the anxieties that come along with it.*

There is considerable risk and uncertainty in an interdisciplinary, collaborative approach, but new learning and new resources lead to developing and fostering new learning networks. As Baldwin and Chang noted, "One of the principal benefits of collaborating with others is to achieve goals that cannot be achieved alone. In fact, one definition of collaboration characterizes the process as 'an effective interpersonal process that facilitates the achievement of goals that cannot be reached when individual professionals act on their own' (Bronstein 2003, 299)."<sup>14</sup>

By working together, we had to critically reflect on each other's intellectual backgrounds, as well as power in the classroom, recognizing that many differences must be worked out for a collaborative approach to work. Our collaboration caused us to be both more critical of our individual teaching practices and also more empathetic. Brookfield noted that coteaching is a key critical reflection lens, "a critical mirror in real time."<sup>15</sup> He argued, "Teaching colleagues can offer different perspectives on a class, interpret classroom events in multiple ways, help us recognize our assumptions, and offer helpful analyses of why things did or didn't work."<sup>16</sup> But depending on teaching styles and personalities, including willingness to give up space and power in the class, coteaching can take some getting

used to. Collaboration means taking risks and wading into an entirely new discipline, which is generally not encouraged in academia, where mastery of a specific, usually very small, area is often the norm. As McDaniel and Colarulli observed, “Real collaboration cannot help but create conflict; and it requires compromise, sharing of power and responsibility, exposure to ideas and teaching styles of colleagues, and loss of autonomy for faculty.”<sup>17</sup> We learned how to work with each other and found shared pedagogical interests, yet we have also disagreed in some areas of teaching and writing. We have learned to compromise along the way, realizing that two perspectives and combined knowledge ultimately strengthen the work within and beyond the classroom environment.

The media and information literacy course we developed grew out of library support for teaching information literacy skills on campus, a course Spencer initially taught. At the same time, Natasha invited him to her media literacy course to do a “one shot.” After surveying the course syllabus, Spencer noted similarities between IL and ML. Neither of us was particularly content with the direction of our individual course. We both wanted more in terms of teaching these literacies, and especially wanted to move away from skills-based approaches and protectionist models and focus on student creation and participation. We had both previously read critical pedagogy in ML and IL, but had struggled for a number of reasons, including lack of time, to incorporate its central tenets into our individual classes. Our desire to move forward with the collaboration and reinvent the course took precedence. Reinvention was ad hoc, and the first iteration was not as critical as we wanted it to be. This in turn prompted our search for critical conferences where we could acquire insight and knowledge on how to better accomplish this.

But despite the obvious deficiencies, happily, our classroom collaboration had a positive knock-on effect on our students, though initially not entirely by design. By including readings on collaboration by Howard Rheingold (“smart mobs”) and Henry Jenkins (“participatory culture”),<sup>18</sup> and having students share resources, work in teams, and take turns writing and sharing class notes to help them with end-of-semester reflection papers, we repeatedly emphasized the benefits of working together. This classroom culture took time to develop, of course, and at first students were apprehensive about both learning from peers and their own agency in the class. Most of the ways we elicited student participation, especially in challenging conversations, are hardly new or particularly revolutionary, such as open-ended problem-posing questions, creating room for silence in order to reflect, pair-and-share exercises, and so on. Another way we prompted active engagement with coursework was eliminating daily in-class quizzes over the readings (which seemed to generate an inordinate amount of anxiety in students and also forced them into a learn-and-dump, rote memory approach to the material) in favor of having students complete pass/fail “course preparation assignments” over the readings before coming to class.

Rather than witnessing a lack of civility in our classroom (incivility continues to pretty rare in our experience), more common were attempts to avoid challeng-



ing conversations on the critical components of the curriculum such as Freirean concepts of education, media representations of gender, and copyright and ownership.<sup>19</sup> For example, at the start of the semester, we challenged students to think about the “why” of higher education, encouraging reflection on why they were here and connecting it to Freire’s theories. We were open about the inherent instructor power in classroom dynamics and honest about breaking down barriers as much as possible in order to encourage meaningful discussion and respecting multiple points of view in a safe learning environment. It was easy for us to reassure students that we would not grade them any differently when they disagreed with us, but this idea often elicited raised eyebrows. Nonetheless, these types of metacognitive conversations, combined with constructivist media and information-decoding approaches, clearly signaled to the students the importance of their active, participatory, and engaged role in the classroom.<sup>20</sup> This is not to imply that students were comfortable with this type of agency. Indeed, many reacted very apprehensively to our approach, as they were used to neoliberal, conformist, and passive approaches to education—pay, show up, be taught at, listen, study, regurgitate, do homework, get a grade. Many students were initially confused by our model and reluctant to question ideas, as this contrasted deeply with the ways in which they had been taught for most of their lives.

Although our media and information literacy class evolved each time we taught it, we continued to struggle with practical ways to incorporate critical pedagogy (e.g., including explicit social justice themes, rejecting banking methods of education, and using the power and value of collaborative peer learning) that would resonate with a wide variety of student perspectives. The student body at our institution, though increasingly diverse in terms of race, gender identity, and sexual orientation, was still largely conservative, white, working class, and rural. What are their true thoughts on critical pedagogy? Do they just remain quiet and compliant, knowing the ideological perspectives of their teachers? Silence and compliance was not the type of critical pedagogy we envisioned. We prefer the approach offered by Cope: “I argue that librarians must challenge intolerance, and that the best way to do this (in a way that is consistent with general democratic/institutional principles) is to focus on the procedural/behavioral issues (i.e., giving space to a plurality of perspectives) rather than focusing on the interior life of the student (i.e., telling them they are racist and trying to change their mind).”<sup>21</sup>

## Analyzing Our Classroom and Conference Experiences

The irony of student avoidance techniques in the classroom, such as not engaging in discussion for fear of raising a point that disagrees with the instructor’s point of view, is even greater in light of the unrelenting mantra to develop critical-thinking



skills in our students. On the one hand, most higher education institutions place a high value on critical thinking and writing. On the other, the realization that, in some classrooms, only certain ideological viewpoints are allowed is surely a frustrating paradox for students. Libby V. Morris's work on critical thinking and dialogue is worth quoting at length:

College and university faculty members identify critical thinking as one of, if not, the most important competencies for undergraduate education.... Yet a larger challenge now awaits. In response to recent events across the U.S. where public demonstrations and clashes of beliefs resulted in violence, colleges now have a moral responsibility to move education beyond critical thinking to experience in critical dialogue. Critical thinking is generally considered an individual characteristic and is integral to cognitive development. Critical dialogue is more than basic communication skills; it is an active group process and opportunity for students and faculty members to learn how to engage in civil, respectful, difficult conversations. In these conversations, we will tap not only into the cognitive domain, but also into our attitudinal and behavioral predilections. Critical dialogue is learned in community and serves the community, and the process can unite students and faculty members from divergent backgrounds and viewpoints around difficult, yet shared, issues and problems.<sup>22</sup>

How can we come anywhere close to the type of critical dialogue Morris encouraged if students are unable to share their honest perspectives and opinions and educators are unwilling to reflect deeply about their own practice and power? Is it even really teaching if we merely try to swap student's ideologies for our own? As Bahls wrote, "And let us savor that moment when our students' grasp of critical thinking empowers them to disagree with us. We must respect the views of all of our students, whether politically liberal, moderate or conservative. And just as we track and seek to improve the belonging and engagement of students based on race, ability or disability, gender and sexuality, we should pay attention to political and religious conservatives who may feel marginalized."<sup>23</sup>

We want to be clear here that we are not advocating classroom tolerance of hate speech but rather dialogue that encourages sharing of multiple perspectives. Our expectations of the students are outlined in the syllabus: "Students are expected to treat the instructor and other students with dignity and respect, especially in cases where a difference of opinion arises. Students who engage in dis-

ruptive behavior are subject to disciplinary action, including removal from the course.” Likewise in the faculty responsibility section, we indicate that we will treat students “with dignity and respect, especially in cases where a difference of opinion arises.” What is and isn’t open for debate in the classroom can be a tricky issue. But there is no magic bullet answer, and dealing with these issues takes experience and a willingness to engage, especially when topics are uncomfortable, and not just for the students. We are certain that critical pedagogy educators have much more experience at this than we do, and conference spaces are places where we should be learning from each other regarding the most successful strategies for inclusive classroom environments. Shutting down conversations because students challenge liberal views seems like the least effective pedagogical approach. Students should be able to articulate and defend their positions in a safe learning environment—how else will their critical thinking and dialogue abilities develop?

Unsurprisingly, the unethical and dogmatic approach of forcing students to adhere to the instructor’s point of view has the potential to instill intolerance, or even increase intolerance, of others.<sup>24</sup> Legault, Gutsell, and Inzlicht suggested that attempts to convince students of one’s own views ultimately backfire or boomerang, as students resist what they perceive to be indoctrination.<sup>25</sup> Herakova and Congdon stated, “Kaplan, Gimbel, and Harris (2016) found that people tend to shut down when their personal and political beliefs are challenged, even when presented with rational and factual evidence, and such shutting down actually increases people’s conviction of their faulty and ignorant beliefs.”<sup>26</sup> While some students shut down, others insincerely agree. They’ve learned from previous educational experiences that agreeing with the teacher and general classroom conformism are often rewarded. hooks noted classroom culture is essentially bourgeois culture: “During my college years it was tacitly assumed that we all agreed ... that there would be no critique of the bourgeois class biases shaping and informing pedagogical process (as well as social etiquette) in the classroom.... As silence and obedience to authority were most rewarded, it was taught by example and reinforced by a system of rewards.... Bourgeois values in the classroom create a barrier, blocking the possibility of confrontation and conflict, warding off dissent.”<sup>27</sup>

In our classroom, we challenge these bourgeois values and let students know that the course will not involve much of us talking at them. Rather we encourage meaningful dialogue (including challenging instructor perspectives) among and between the students as part of the critical pedagogy learning process. When we enter conference spaces with educators who articulate support for critical pedagogies, it is surprising to find them reluctant to practice what they preach.

# Recommendations for Fostering Meaningful Dialogue

Allen and Rossatto argued for a “sympathetic critique of critical pedagogy,”<sup>28</sup> which also characterizes what we have attempted to do in this chapter. The main principles of critical pedagogy and critical theory are admirable, but we need to rethink how we teach them to a wide variety of students. As our fellow chapter author noted, many contemporary iterations simply demonstrate that “critical pedagogy is reconstitutive of the very social conditions it seeks to transform, but simply inverts the identities in the social hierarchy.”<sup>29</sup> Despite the challenges, there are many pedagogical techniques to foster genuine, deep critical thinking and dialogue in the classroom. Wills, Brewster and Nowak noted that at the very least, both faculty and students, “could benefit from more awareness of their own ideologies and perceptions of others’ ideologies and how these perceptual positions influence classroom interactions.”<sup>30</sup> Although their research is focused on sociology, they observe a lack of “viewpoint diversity” on the part of university faculty in particular. Similarly, Al-Gharbi contended, “Highly-educated or intelligent people tend to be far more ideological than the general public.... And while educated people may be less likely to discriminate against others on the basis of factors like race, they are significantly more likely to be prejudiced against people who think differently than them, or hold different ideological commitments.”<sup>31</sup>

Of course, our political beliefs often differ from those of our students. As educators, we must develop our capacity for radical empathy,<sup>32</sup> have meaningful conversations with a wide variety of political perspectives, and create spaces wherein those who are silent or agree with the teacher are not the only ones rewarded. Al-Gharbi identified several techniques, including cultural cognition, drawn from moral psychology and other interdisciplinary fields to facilitate this process.<sup>33</sup>

Second, in contrast to some of the dogmatically unwavering viewpoints expressed in the name of critical pedagogy since the 2016 presidential election, it is worth revisiting and remembering that foundational critical pedagogical writings are much more understanding and empathetic of students, even those with ideologically diverse viewpoints. For example, Darder urged us to remember Freire’s concept of love, not the everyday, sentimental definition of the word, but love as “a motivational force for struggle” and “an intentional spiritual act of consciousness that emerges and matures through our own social and material practices, we work to live, learn, and labor together.”<sup>34</sup> Darder continued, “In the process of teaching and learning, it is impossible to express love and respect for students without our willingness to engage them in ways that allow us to know them authentically. This is a form of knowing that demands we transcend our self-absorption and authoritarian fixations, in ways that open us horizontally to know and be known.”<sup>35</sup>

Negating views that don't align with our own prevents teachers from genuinely knowing their students and inhibits authentic critical thought and dialogue. Darder observed if we don't genuinely know our students, they "remain objects to be managed, manipulated, and controlled, in ways that may eventually draw out of them the prescribed answers."<sup>36</sup> Critical pedagogy should adhere to its own fundamental principles and find ways to recognize, accept, teach, and create ideologically inclusive classroom environments. This also applies to critical conference spaces, if they are to continue to be viable spaces where meaningful exchange is valued and possible.

Third, although the theoretical underpinnings of any pedagogical approach are clearly important, theory is too often used as a weapon at conferences to bludgeon those less familiar with it and to assert dominance. It also neatly sidesteps the much trickier application questions. Although Moe asserted that information literacy is incapable of reconciling the abstract desire for critical thinking with the practiced reality, "critical thinking is at the foundation of information literacy, but those selling it are not necessarily in a position to actually supply it. They may be hampered by an inability to think critically about their own practices and proposals."<sup>37</sup> We hope that critical communities will begin to deeply discuss the practical and equally difficult "how questions," such as how is critical pedagogy incorporated into critical information literacy and critical media literacy? What does that look like in the classroom? How do we best engage with all students, and how can we practically reconcile critical theory and pedagogy with conservative views? Should we even try to?

We urge fellow educators who support critical pedagogy to reflect on practices and teaching, just as we ask students to, and promote respect, empowerment, and engagement in the classroom. We can know that critical pedagogy has truly lived up to its ideals only when students feel free to authentically express the ideologies they hold and respectfully disagree with each other and the teacher.

## NOTES

1. Peter McLaren, "A Forward to the Special Issue on Neoliberalism in Education, The Long Road to Redemption: Critical Pedagogy and the Struggle for the Future," *Texas Education Review* 3, no. 2 (2015): 7, <http://txedrev.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/2.-McLaren-Forward-Pub-Ready.pdf>.
2. Especially when comparing the reach and influence of critical information literacy and critical media literacy to the much larger fields of information literacy and media literacy.
3. The italicized text refers to our combined informal, internalized thoughts about critical pedagogy in conference settings and its applications in the classroom as we were experiencing them.
4. CIL questions traditional definitions of what it means to be information-literate and allows librarians to question professional practice (i.e., the MLIS and pedagogy) and respond to social justice issues such as diversity and inclusion. CML also has a social justice focus and, like communications or media studies in general, is interdisciplinary, shaped by influences and theories from many fields, including critical pedagogy, cultural studies, and feminist theory.

5. Patti Lather, "Critical Pedagogy and Its Complicities: A Praxis of Stuck Places," *Educational Theory* 48, no. 4 (Fall 1998): 487.
6. Antonia Darder, Rodolfo D. Torres, and Marta P. Baltodano, "Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction," in *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*, ed. Antonia Darder, Rodolfo D. Torres, and Marta P. Baltodano (New York: Routledge, 2017), 11.
7. Jeremiah B. Wills, Zachary W. Brewster, and Gerald Roman Nowak III, "Students' Religiosity and Perceptions of Professor Bias: Some Empirical Lessons for Sociologists," *American Sociologist* (2018): 13, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12108-018-9388-y>.
8. Alex Arriaga, "Political Division Soars on Campus, Survey Finds," *The Ticker* (blog), *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 1, 2017, <https://www.chronicle.com/blogs/ticker/political-division-soars-on-campus-survey-finds/118061>.
9. These are our interpretations of how conversations and events unfolded.
10. Catherine Fobes and Peter Kaufman, "Critical Pedagogy in the Sociology Classroom: Challenges and Concerns," *Teaching Sociology* 36 (January 2008): 30, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092055X0803600104>.
11. Zoe Williams, "Why Are We Living in an Age of Anger—Is It because of the 50-Year Rage Cycle?" *Guardian*, May 16, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2018/may/16/living-in-an-age-of-anger-50-year-rage-cycle>.
12. We attended at least ten conferences in both fields between 2015 and 2018.
13. "By criticizing banking education we have to recognize that not all kinds of lecturing is [sic] banking education. You can still be very critical while lecturing." Ira Shor and Paulo Freire, *A Pedagogy for Liberation* (South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey, 1987), 40.
14. Roger G. Baldwin and Deborah A. Chang, "Collaborating to Learn, Learning to Collaborate," *Peer Review* 9, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 27, <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/collaborating-learn-learning-collaborate>.
15. Stephen D. Brookfield, *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2017), 135.
16. Brookfield, *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*, 136.
17. Elizabeth A. McDaniel and Guy C. Colarulli, "Collaborative Teaching in the Face of Productivity Concerns: The Dispersed Team Model," *Innovative Higher Education* 22 (1997): 27.
18. Howard Rheingold, *Smart Mobs* (Cambridge, MA: Basic Books, 2002); Henry Jenkins, *Participatory Culture in a Networked Era* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2016).
19. We have written extensively elsewhere on copyright, ownership, and remixing.
20. Thanks to Project Look Sharp's online class "Facilitating Challenging Topics in the Classroom Using the Tools of Media Literacy," for helping to think more deeply about this subject.
21. Jonathan T. Cope, "The Reconquista Student: Critical Information Literacy, Civics, and Confronting Student Intolerance," *Communications in Information Literacy* 11, no. 2 (2017): 275, <https://doi.org/10.15760/comminfolit.2017.11.2.2>.
22. Libby V. Morris, "Moving beyond Critical Thinking to Critical Dialogue," *Innovative Higher Education* 42, no. 5–6 (2017): 377, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-017-9413-z>.
23. Steven C. Bahls, "An Invitation," *Inside Higher Ed*, February 28, 2017, <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2017/02/28/higher-education-should-acknowledge-many-americans-believe-colleges-indoctrinate>.
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  29. Sarah Hartman-Caverly (chapter reviewer) in response to the authors, August 2018.
  30. Wills, Brewster and Nowak, "Students' Religiosity," 14.
  31. Musa Al-Gharbi, "Three Strategies for Navigating Moral Disagreements," *Heterodox Academy*, February 16, 2018, <https://heterodoxacademy.org/three-strategies-moral-disagreements/>.
  32. Elizabeth Segran, "Try This Exercise in Radical Empathy to Minimize Conflict," *Fast Company*, December 19, 2016, <https://www.fastcompany.com/3066609/try-this-exercise-in-radical-empathy-to-minimize-conflict>.
  33. Including lowering "the perceived stakes of the disagreement or conflict," appealing "to your interlocutor's own identity, values, narratives, frames of reference when possible," and leading by example. "Model civility, flexibility, intellectual humility, good faith if you want others to do the same." Al-Gharbi, "Three Strategies."
  34. Antonia Darder, "Pedagogy of Love: Embodying our Humanity," in *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*, ed. Antonia Darder, Rodolfo D. Torres, and Marta P. Baltodano (New York: Routledge, 2017), 96–97.
  35. Darder, "Pedagogy of Love," 97.
  36. Darder, "Pedagogy of Love," 98.
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