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Editorial

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EDITORIAL

Blue, Orange, White, and Brown: Causality, Values, and the Impact of Messages

It is a simple question. I ask the "teachers-to-be" in my university classes at the beginning of every term: "How many of you have benefited from exposure to hostile, negative, and caustic comments from a teacher?" I provide a second version: "How many of you find yourselves attending to a lesson and learning better *after* the teacher criticizes you or attempts to embarrass you in front of the class?" I give a third version: "How many of you have been made good by being told you were bad?"

I continually hope that these questions will refute the notion that threats and punishment are the proper strategies for managing a classroom of students and an effective way of promoting a learning environment. I have never had anyone tell me that they prefer learning within a caustic hurtful environment. So, my conclusion for them is, "Don't use threatening or hurtful strategies…you don't want them; your students will not want them either." These messages are convincing mainly based on personal values. Students, teachers, and I generally share the belief that kindness is a preferable state of affairs over hostility.

However, each of us can provide a plethora of examples where caustic teachers hurt, minimize students' willingness to learn, and make learning a miserable activity. If no one prefers the hostile stance, why do people use it, and where does it arise? It seems self-evident that banishing caustic remarks from learning environments is a minimal and necessary step to success. Yet, the road to dismissing caustic remarks is not without some hurdles to clear.

When I ask, "Has anyone ever profited by a caustic remark from a teacher," most students remain silent. However, I invariably (to my continual astonishment), have three or four out of every group raise their hands. One by one, each recounts an incident where a teacher was hurtful, spiteful, or just plain mean to them with the result that they became better students and better people. There is a caveat though. It is a common refrain, "I succeeded just out of spite!"

Can Cruel Be Cool?

If you have read much of invitational theory, this finding should present you with as much difficulty as it does me. A number of questions have plagued me for years: How can hurtful, caustic, and spiteful treatment of a student (or anyone for that matter) result in a person who is smarter, happier, healthier, and in general, better off? Are we to believe these students when they say that nasty teachers inspired them to do good work? Is it relevant that they did these good things, in their words, "out of spite"? How do caustic remarks, as one student put it, "Improve my behavior out of shame because my behavior *was* bad" and by implication, deserved mistreatment?

Examples of negative treatment inducing high levels of achievement abound in many

areas, particularly in sports and other highly competitive arenas. How do caustic remarks help make us better? If caustic treatment works in sports, is it true elsewhere? Can caustic treatment of children improve learning and satisfaction with life?

Invitational Education®, with the use of the "blue card/orange card" analogy, has a construct for thinking about messages we send and their effects. Essentially, orange cards are caustic and blue cards are nurturing. A blue message is a message of encouragement, support, and confidence. An orange message is an attempt to harm, belittle, or discourage. The theory is that blue cards build confidence, encourage effort, and provide a pleasant environment for learning. Orange, on the other hand, does exactly the opposite.

Unexpectedly, the blue message theory might explain why orange cards sometimes work, even though the theory itself describes orange cards as destructive. It is true enough that caustic comments were hurtful to most of the students who claimed that caustic messages inspired them toward improvement. An explanation for this phenomenon does not require that we toss away our blue message theory. We simply have to look at a different *source* for the blue messages that *did* inspire them. In each case where students were treated caustically by their teachers and claimed positive benefits, the *student*, as a mindfully independent individual, was the primary source of the encouraging blue cards that we believe assist in learning success. For example, while the teacher sends a demeaning message, the student simply rejects it and inserts in its place affirming messages originating from the self. Students confirm this theory in most, but not all, cases.

Some students also state that they discounted the teacher's nastiness because a different teacher, either past or present, expressed confidence in them. In these cases, our blue card theory holds up quite well: Encouraging, optimistic, nurturing communication and treatment fosters learning and behavioral successes. However, our orange card theory takes a bit of an intellectual beating here. It appears that some students are taking orange cards and, instead of being destructive, are blowing blue life into them by using the orange card for motivation. Researchers have noted this phenomenon and have labeled these individuals as resilient personalities. A resilient person simply takes orange and turns it blue. But how?

Again, the blue card theory provides a clue. When interviewing resilient students, researchers do find one common element: All resilient students mention the anchoring effect of at least one person "who cares." Frequently this is a parent or grandparent, sometimes a coach or teacher; less frequently it is a friend or sibling. Usually there is more than one caring individual providing an anchor for one aspect or another of the resilient student's life. That "caring person" is always to be found. It appears that "blue cards" in one's life do not just materialize internally as suggested by my earlier theory; they are systematically provided by others.

Creating New Labels

The phenomenon of positive effects seemingly originating from caustic events gives rise to a number of questions: What do we call an orange card that has the end effect of encouragement? And in the case of satiation (where students hear something so frequently they do not attend to it), are blue cards still blue and orange cards still or-

ange? Is a blue message an orange message when blue card kindness is directed toward the misbehaving student (who has been handing out lots of orange cards) and thereby evokes the justified, but still hurtful, feelings of guilt, remorse, or feelings of unworthiness? Are these blue cards now orange since they evoked shame and anguish?

I suppose we could have a bit of fun and add new labels. Orange cards that the students mutate into blue ones we could call "brown cards" because, when we mix orange and blue, we get brown. Blue and orange cards that are sent but not heard or are rejected out-of-hand we could call "white cards" since, like white noise in the background, we simply turn off our sensory perception of what we relegate to the background. We could have bright blue (enthusiastic) and dark blue (thoughtful); bright orange (overt) and dark orange (covert). We could even have rainbow messages; these would be the minimal encourages like, "I see, tell me more" that can be interpreted in many ways and the results reveal many of the thought processes of the speaker. With a bit of imagination, we could derive an entire color pallet of messages. However, there is a more reasonable way to enhance our understanding of messages and their impact.

The Rigors of Theory and Research

The more fruitful approach would be to study potential cause and effect paths of messages and outcomes in hope of developing explanatory structures we could use to predict outcomes for our various choices for action. What we are advocating is that we develop causal theories for communication within the helping professions.

That leads us to deal with two of the toughest activities in education: The development of explanatory theories and arguments of causality. These are sufficiently difficult that when I was first exposed to Invitational Education (IE), it was far more attractive simply to accept the strategies as personal values than to try to validate these beliefs. In short, "I like Invitational Education so I'm going to use it." Yet, as we shall see, that works for many of us in the short term, but is inadequate when we are attempting to convince others, or even more problematic, to institute policies or develop school culture.

These twists and turns of the blue card orange card analogy create a host of problems for us when we attempt to convince others of the merits of nurturing postures and the limitations of more competitive or hostile approaches based solely on personal value structures. First and inevitably, someone will say, "I had a teacher who was so mean to me, but I learned a lot from her." This negation strategy is based on an attempt to provide a single example that demonstrates that the value assertion is inadequate to explain what actually is happening. This attempt to discount a more gentle approach to life is predicated on a deterministic view of causality. That is, if I can find one case where hostility and caustic environments do not result in failure, then caustic treatment cannot be the cause of failure. Likewise, if I can find any examples of success where encouragement was absent, then encouragement is not the cause of success.

This logic is actually quite solid as long as we accept the deterministic paradigm that is the basis of Western science. As individuals who want to promote nurturing approaches to learning, we are faced with serious ques-

tions: How can we devise ways to answer our critics and provide explanations for the causes of success and failure in school that predict outcomes?

There are at least three ways to address the need to have stronger arguments for advocating inviting approaches. Most, however, lack the predictive validity that is the keystone of a causal argument. Each of the three has its own merits, and each has certain costs to us as advocates of IE. Let us examine each in turn.

Establishing Core Values

One way of responding to critics is to present inviting approaches to learning as a core value. A core value is not just a personal value, but a value so basic that society embraces it as part of the social fabric. Within a democratic society, we have core values of self-determination, freedom of expression, and liberty. Extending these core values to students creates an environment where they are free to search for happiness in many ways and by their personal choices.

An inviting approach honors this liberty and individual pursuit of fulfillment. However, this support of individual determination will cause us to face problematic issues that are sufficient roadblocks that core values alone will not guide the inviting educator. An example might be a student who refuses to complete homework assignments in math, but when examinations are given, the mischievous fellow miraculously obtains perfect scores. This student has found a personal alternative to fulfilling the learning goal. Since this mirrors the efficiency theory of a free market economy (he who gets more with less therefore has an advantage in the marketplace) we have to respect his actions in support of our democratic ideals. This is problematic for some. What about the students who do not achieve well? Do they get to pick and choose what assignments they will do? Do these students have the right to fail if that is their choice? The realistic answer to both questions is a resounding "yes," but that type of thinking tends to tilt the whole educational enterprise on its edge. Certainly, it does not win many converts.

Other problems exist when using core values. Freedom of speech implies freedom of thought. Liberty provides for individual determination of life's goals. Regardless of society's goals for a student, the student can always reserve the right to reject those goals and pursue personally relevant goals (within broad social constraints.) As a result, unless there is danger or interference with the rights of others, teachers cannot compel or coerce students to accept education's goals for them; they can only persuade. At some time, all students cancel society's goals and insert their own during their educational careers. We expect this as the budding independence of the student mirrors the maturation process required for productive citizenship. However, it is difficult for us to accept the idea that students *have the right* to make choices that may not be in their best interests. To whit, it's not a very convincing argument and is easily countered by a number of other arguments, each based on competing values. While the attraction of appealing to core values is valid, it is insufficient.

Jurisprudential Evaluation and Upside and Downside Analyses

Another approach is to attempt to provide a preponderance of evidence to show the validity of IE in various conditions and outcomes and then allow the individual to de-

termine the appropriate inferences that can be made. This is often referred to as jurisprudential evaluation since it functions much like a courtroom by establishing evidence and presenting both positive and negative cases to a jury. The "upside and downside" is simply the positive and negative cases; that is, the best and the worst that can happen is predicted by following the tenet under examination. In this process we collect all relevant information regarding our theory; in this case we might postulate that nurturing comments precipitate successes and caustic comments facilitate failure. We then look at all types of information, both supportive and unsupportive, that illuminate our understanding. *JITP* has followed this approach since its inception.

With data carefully established, we could just leave the conclusion to the individual hoping that the weight of evidence will convince others to agree with us. In many ways, regardless of the techniques used, this is actually what happens. There are people who still believe the moon landings were fakes and Elvis is still alive. Some, regardless of the quality and substance of evidence, will believe what they want.

In addition to vagaries of individual decision making, establishing our advocacy argument on jurisprudential evaluation does not provide us with the explanatory structures that guide skillful use of IE constructs. We have lots of evidence that both timing and context has a major effect on the outcomes of any helping actions directed toward students. Without an understanding of these interaction effects, we may have an effective tool for learning, but lack substantive knowledge on how to use it. We risk promoting the attitude of Dr. Pangloss from Voltaire's *Candide*. Once Pangloss took a positive position, it was positive forever.

Whether appropriate or not, the same attitude is directed at each and every problem. This Pollyanna approach does not have the strength or depth to handle life's tragedies, the death of a parent or loss of a job, nor the day-to-day wear-and-tear on our psyches, as well as maneuvering through life's obstacles. On my own part, some days just are not as good as others. Even when things are very good for me, I know great suffering exists for others. What we need is a theory that has evidence sufficient for probable causation.

Probabilistic Causation

It is in the area of probabilistic causation that our evidentiary case for IE must be made. It is, of course, the most difficult to understand and the most difficult to develop. When I demonstrated the connection between orange messages and positive outcomes, I made a point to emphasize that the orange messages were not the only messages being sent. Students who find themselves in the situation of using caustic comments to improve readily recount the many messages they were sending to *themselves* and these were ones of self-affirmation: "I *can* do it. I'll show you!" Thus the blue message is present even when the orange message is vocal. That left us considering whether caustic messages are good if they promote success in these limited circumstances.

More importantly, we do not have a particularly strong case to explain *why* caustic messages that are so devastating to some are employed by others who receive them to create positive experiences. We cannot address these complex issues until we abandon sim-

plistic notions of determinism that lead us to conclude, "Nurturing messages are good; caustic messages are bad." We must delve deeper into actual events that lead us to address a host of variables other than the messages themselves involved in communication.

This strategy has us looking for and identifying "interaction effects." It can be helpful to think of interaction affects as special conditions. A short circuit can, but does not necessarily, cause an injury. Smoking can, but does not necessarily, cause cancer. Playing in the street can, but does not necessarily result in being struck by a moving car. Yet, we cannot discount that short circuits, smoking, and playing in the street are risky behaviors that can result in injury or death. Nor can we argue that if you use a tool with a short circuit, smoke, or play in the street, you *will be* injured. We do know that these behaviors increase the risks, but alone are insufficient to cause the negative outcomes. At least they are insufficient without intervening variables that interact with our already risky conditions. The short circuit must be closed in such a way as to pass the electricity through the individual to ground. The smoking must interact with the physiology and genetic structure of the individual to cause disease. A moving car must be traveling with sufficient speed, with a distracted driver for the accident to occur.

Probabilistic causation appears to be common sense, quite conventional, and without controversy. However, our behavior frequently abandons probabilistic causation in favor of determinism. Reflect on how we actually deal with risky behaviors and how we embrace deterministic causality: "If you don't get an education, you'll have a bad job." "If you smoke marijuana you'll become a drug addict." "If you have unprotected sex, you'll catch a disease." "If you say something mean, someone will be hurt." Students easily see through our risk analysis and discount our concern. Just as our reluctant convert argues that caustic messages can inspire students, students will remind you that as a teacher your college degree earns you less than bus drivers earn. They may retort with the established fact that a President smoked marijuana and did not become a drug addict. Or, that two people who only have sex with each other expose themselves only to a minuscule probability of contracting an STD.

We must ask ourselves, "Do nurturing messages cause those who receive them to find the energy to conduct themselves in ways that are productive for themselves and others?" Our answer, of course, is, "It depends." We are now asking questions of probabilistic causation.

Academic objectivity requires that when we explore a phenomenon, we set up our analysis so that any attempt to prove a theory is an equal attempt to disprove it. When we examine premises of IE, we have to look not just for the evidence that justifies or validates the premise, but also any data that may refute it. Our task then is to make sense of all the data that guides our practice and the arguments sufficient to gain supporters, to do this systematically, and to develop constructs sufficiently complex to provide evidence of predictive validity.

There are a number of ways to handle this problem and to gain support for the premises made in IE. None are simple and none are direct. Our best chance in the next decade for building the case for IE is in developing comprehensive explanatory structures that lead to predictive validity. That is, we de-

velop and test specific theories that provide us with advanced knowledge about the outcomes.

We could, for example, measure variables in a school and then predict learning outcomes based on IE variables such as the ratio of nurturing messages to caustic messages. Another is to measure many variables of a school, then work to change the communication and behavior patterns to correspond with the IE philosophy and measure the differences in outcomes from the pre and post assessments. Yet another is to compare two groups of schools where one highlights characteristics that are in alignment with IE and the other is matched for similar characteristics but lack a commitment to IE theory. There are other ways, of course, but one can clearly see the complexity and difficulty involved. Researchers speak of "time, money, and pain" when setting up research studies. Making the case for IE will involve copious amount of all three. This is the price that has to be paid to move beyond slogan and value statements.

Some Who Pay the Price

This volume of *JITP*, like those in the past, is built by those individuals who gladly give the time, money, and pain needed to develop the case for IE. The first article is a family affair. In the article *Cross-Cultural Instruction, Consciousness Raising, and Inviting Heightened Self-Esteem,* Ivers, Ivers, and Ivers explore the gap between who we are and the culturally influenced "ought-to-be" self. Postulating that the differential has the potential to lead to a negative self-image, the Ivers' clan argues that schooling can assist students in understanding the role of their culture in determining who they are and how they see themselves. By having skills to analyze not only the self and the skills to analyze the degree of validity the cultural norms have, this chasm can be ameliorated, assisting the student toward a more robust and wholesome experience.

In our second piece, *Coloring in the Emotional Language of Place,* Martin Haigh examines how emotional states are affected by the characteristics of place, one of the five P's in invitational theory. Using Samkhya perspective (Samkhya is one of the six schools of classical Hindu philosophy), Haigh describes how learners are asked to reflect on their environment and how it relates to their current modes of thinking.

The third article, *Easing Transitions of Military Dependents into Hawaii Public Schools: An Invitational Education Link,* describes the plight of military families experiencing frequent and disruptive moves around the world and how the culture of the new destination affects family structure. Using Hawaii as a base of analysis, Kathleen Berg describes inviting programs designed to identify the needs frequent relocations create and how they can be ameliorated.

A Final Note

This is my ninth year as editor of *JITP*. It has been a rewarding and satisfying experience. Through the *JITP*, I have met people all over the world and the *JITP* has published articles from all the inhabited continents except South America. Recently, I was discussing Invitational Education with a school in Belem, Brazil so the possibility of a complete world sweep is in the making. That is a challenge I'll leave to the next editor. It is time for me to step aside and for a new voice to tackle the task of building the probabilistic causal case for invitational

education. As I write, we are looking for the next editor. I would love to introduce him or her to you in this final editorial, but life does not march to the deadlines our print presses. However, I promise to put on my detective hat and provide you with a complete run-down on all the amazing qualities of your new editor. And with that, I will say farewell and hope you will appreciate, as I do the fine work of the authors of this and past editions of *JITP*.

Phil Riner
Editor

Cross-Cultural Instruction, Consciousness Raising, and Inviting Heightened Self-Esteem

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It is beyond debate that one's culture plays a significant role in the self-evaluative process. However, each particular culture uses different measurements to determine who will be crowned with respectability and who will not. The wider the gulf between the actual self and the culturally influenced ought self, the greater the chances are that one will experience a self-concept dominated by the negative. Deep cultural instruction in both the classroom and in counseling has the potential to assist one in recognizing that his or her self-esteem may be culture-bound. This realization has the potential to assist one in recognizing cultural irrationality and ameliorating culturally created personal assumptions that do not contribute to a happy and positive life.

In 1930, two Australian miners were searching for gold in a part of New Guinea where it was believed that few, if any, humans had ever been. The land was considered to be uninhabited and uninhabitable. Camped on a mountain ridge, at dusk, the receding daylight illuminated thousands of points of light that obviously came from campfires in the huge valley below. It was the first glimpse of a civilization that had existed untouched by the modern world; a civilization that had developed in isolation for thousands of years; a civilization of 50,000 people, living in the Stone Age, who were unaware that any other humans walked the earth.

In his book, *The Third Chimpanzee*, geographer Jared Diamond (1992) briefly discusses the amazing discovery and the shock experienced on both sides as an expedition from the outside world finally entered the valley in 1938. It was a collision of two worlds; a collision whose magnitude was not only enhanced by extreme technological differences, but also by major gulfs in sexual mores, perceptions of worth and value, and assumptions on the nature of the world. There is not a single individual of the Grand Valley of New Guinea, born at least five or six years previous to the event, who does not remember exactly where he or she was at that surreal time, when the walls of their reality came tumbling down

In the decades since, the world of the Dani people of the Grand Valley has become more and more like our world. They have adopted many of the conveniences and technologies of the wider planetary expanse. In a subsequent book, the Pulitzer Prize winning

Guns, Germs, and Steel, Diamond (1999) asks another question. Why did European cultures come to dominate New Guinea culture instead of vice versa? Why weren't Europeans "discovered" by the New Guineans and afforded superior technological advantages originating in New Guinea? There are many proposed answers to this question, most of them knee-jerk and uncritically examined. Psychologist Steven Pinker (2002) sums up for us one of the more basic tenets of Diamond's explanation:

> So Eurasia conquered the world not because Eurasians are smarter but because they could best take advantage of the principle that many heads are better than one. The "culture" of any of the conquering nations of Europe, such as Britain, is in fact a greatest-hits collection of inventions assembled across thousands of miles and years. The collection is made up of cereal crops and alphabetic writing from the Middle East, gunpowder and paper from China, domesticated horses from Ukraine, and many others. But the necessary insular cultures of Australia, Africa, and the Americas had to make do with a few homegrown technologies, and as a result they were no match for their pluralistic conquerors. Even within Eurasia and (later) the Americas, cultures that were isolated by mountainous geography—for example, in the Appalachians, the Balkans, and the Scottish highlands–remained backward for centuries in comparison with the vast network of people around them. (pp. 68-69)

If this theory is true, the advancement that Eurasia enjoyed was at least partially due to *what they were able to learn from different cultures* and their willingness to adopt and change. Diamond (1999) also mentions that Eurasia had the market on animals and plants that were easily domesticated. But other cultures still had to be willing to adopt them. In the Americas, Africa, Australia, and New Guinea, the civilizations there were willing to adopt new ideas, but geography and lack of contact did not afford much opportunity for diverse ideas to spread. *The question is, if cross-cultural exposure can have huge effects on the macro level from one group to another, might such exposure, coupled with our willingness to adopt and change, be able to work its magic on the micro level in the lives of individual human beings?*

On the IAIE website, under *What is Invitational Education*, we read that it is a "model for understanding and communicating messages intended to summon forth the realization of human potential as well as for identifying and changing those forces that destroy potential" (IAIE, 2007). If the aforementioned assumptions and theories are true, cross-cultural exposure may have a significant effect on the realization of our students' potential. Conversely, one's particular culture often sends messages that have the tendency to inhibit one's potential rather than enhance it. Culture has the power to both bless and curse, to be inviting and disinviting.

Previous research has linked the knowledge of a second language with greater verbal ability in one's first language, greater flexibility in thinking, and a greater overall cognitive development (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2007; Lambert, 1963; Landry, 1973). Might exposure to diverse cultures call down similar, but maybe not identical, blessings? It is often said that borrowed words from other

languages enrich and make languages "smarter." Could borrowed cultural paradigms, some even learned unconsciously and below the surface, make individual people "smarter?" Could lack of exposure to diverse worldviews potentially limit one's capacity to accept invitations to see oneself in a different, and potentially more positive, light? Could it also inhibit one's ability to view others with a greater sense of value than the culture affords to them? We have no solid answer to these questions. However, there is no doubt that some cultures view certain human characteristics more positively than others. There is also no doubt that one's particular culture plays a huge role in the individual's self-evaluative process and that different cultures produce dissimilar, culturally created measurements that their members use to evaluate themselves. To further explore the above issues, and how they can be addressed in both teaching and counseling, we will first have to take a deeper look at both the perceptual tradition and culture's overflowing influence in our lives.

The Perceptual Tradition

The *Perceptual Tradition* is basically the cornerstone of Invitational Education. In a nutshell, it claims that our actions and attitudes are largely determined by the way we perceive ourselves and the world. It is based on the principle that different people will have different, often unquestioned, frames of reference, not all of which promote well-being (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987). Failure to *fully* comprehend the implications of the above two sentences is responsible for much misunderstanding, contention, and unhappiness (Coombs, Avila, & Purkey, 1978).

The ongoing quest to understand human behavior can be enhanced by examining the "phenomenal fields" of different individuals (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987, p.30). How do they react to and interpret the cards that life deals them? Just because people have the same experiences, does not mean that they will share the same reactions. Most behavior is likely the result of the perceptual field one has developed. However, many people exercise a sort of "phenomenal absolutism" by just presuming almost everyone interprets reality the same as they do (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987, p. 30). Phenomenal absolutists will assume those who perceive things differently are either somehow incorrectly oriented, dishonest, inexperienced, unintelligent, or mentally unbalanced. They fail to recognize the many diverse interpretations to which our world circumstances lend themselves. Effective communication between two parties requires recognition of diverse perceptual realities (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987).

A "Perceptualist" would say that people's feelings are manifestations not necessarily of things as they "really" are, but rather they are manifestations of their *perceptions* of reality (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987). Artificial social realities are created all the time and people allow these artificial realities to function as automatic control switches for turning their emotions and deepest feelings on and off at will. One's interpretation of "truth" comes from one's perceptions, which perceptions can be ever-so-tacitly manipulated by the phenomenal field that lurks over one as an engineer at a control panel.

One of the hopes of this article is that cross-cultural instruction, done a certain way, can help the perceiver recognize at least four things: (a) He or she has a culturally created frame of reference. (b) This phenomenal

field can be replete with irrational elements. (c) Irrational elements in one's cultural frame of reference can assist in producing a low self-concept that will bring unpleasantness for the individual and those surrounding him or her. (d) Since these frames of reference are created by us (either individually or collectively) we have the existential ability (albeit quite taxing) to replace these irrational elements with ones that are more consistent with sound thought.

When one dares delve into the cross-cultural realm, questions necessarily arise concerning whether our cultural paradigms exercise almost complete subconscious control over us, or, on the other hand, do we easily recognize their often irrational nature yet subscribe to them just to satisfy peer expectations and gain acceptance. This is a difficult question to answer. We would *guess* the answer is somewhere in between. If things were almost all subconscious, they would be extremely difficult to change and would compromise the exercise of personal agency. None of us would like to believe that ultimately we have little or no control over our lives. However, if we all just follow along just to be accepted, while really exercising independent thinking deep inside, it is difficult to believe that *we just pretend* to be attracted to people of a certain weight range, pretend to adopt a fatalistic or rugged individualist world view, pretend to see time in a certain way, and pretend to possess personal space preferences *just to be accepted* even though within ourselves we may subscribe to completely different personal predilections and paradigms. In the U.S., people in "red" states don't seem to go "blue" when in the privacy of the voting booth and vice versa. We would guess things lie somewhere between both extremes in that people do have the potential to exercise some control (although likely not total control) and that irrationalities in one's world view are not easily recognized and often have to be brought to one's attention. However, once brought to the surface, individuals could begin the laborious task of overcoming their deleterious influence.

The Power of Cultural Paradigms

Culture wields an often fearsome power to both manipulate and limit our view of the world, of others, and of ourselves. As we grow, other people tell us what reality is like, how we should be, and how we should think. A neatly packaged, culturally created version of happiness is even provided to us free of charge. However, Shakespeare said, "But, O! How bitter a thing it is to look into happiness through another man's eyes!"

The general importance of self-esteem for happiness and overall mental health is basically uncontested in psychological circles (Wang & Ollendick, 2001). Lack of a healthy self-concept is widely considered a risk factor for potential psychological dysfunction (Bednar & Peterson, 1995, as cited in Wang & Ollendick, 2001; Purkey & Novak, 1984; Purkey & Schmidt, 1987). However, self-esteem seems, to a significant extent, to originate by fulfilling culturally mandated standards (Wang & Ollendick, 2001). One constructs a self-concept around social values and judgments that often differ widely between cultures (Mruk, 1995, as cited in Wang & Ollendick, 2001). In other words, people possessing the same characteristics could experience a higher degree of self-esteem in one culture and a lower degree in another. It is widely assumed that the larger the gulf between the *actual self* and the *ought self* (the ought self is culturally determined to a significant extent), the more

substantial hit one's self-esteem will encounter. If there is more congruence between the actual and ought selves, it is assumed that better psychological health will result (Wang & Ollendick, 2001).

The intertwining of culture and psychology is actually quite amazing. For example, anorexia nervosa, a common dilemma in more economically privileged classes is almost non-existent in third-world circumstances (Matsumoto, 1986). Schizophrenia, which has been linked to chemical imbalances, abates more quickly in some cultures rather than others (Matsumoto, 1986). Hispanics, Blacks, Asians, and Non-Hispanic Whites born in the U.S. have a higher incidence of psychiatric disorders than people of those same racial types born in other countries who moved to the U.S. later in life (Bean, Perry, & Bedell, 2001; Breslau & Chang, 2006). A study was undertaken involving females from the same socio-economic group (upper middle class) in both Spain and Mexico. It was discovered that they had the same rate of getting an eating disorder, which was probably attributable to their similar social class. However, despite that similarity, there was a very significant difference in the girls' perception of the perfect body. The girls in Spain wanted thinner hips, buttocks, and legs and the girls in Mexico wanted bigger hips, buttocks, and legs (Toro et al., 2006).

The above information can be somewhat representative of what Hall (1976) calls *cultural irrationality*. Cultural irrationality permeates our social world and, most of the time, we simply do not realize it. All cultures have their share of irrationalities and negative attributes. We will never be able to completely ameliorate culturally induced suffering, but we can at least inculcate the recognition that much suffering is culturally engendered. We see such irrationality all the time among the students in the schools in which we teach. Most students (and probably most adults) have a form of culture-bound self-esteem. They conform to the irrationalities that decide who has got what it takes and who does not. But in a culture-bound or emic self-esteem (emic means within a particular culture or subculture) there are some winners and a lot of losers. What we should desire is more of an etic self-esteem (etic means across cultures) that is not culture-bound but rather more of an existential approach where the individual, armed with cross-cultural knowledge, responsibly and rationally, and I repeat responsibly and rationally, makes individual judgments that determine one's own personal worth and value.

The preceding paragraphs constitute broad issues that cultural instruction in our many different academic disciplines *generally* fails to address. For example, cultural instruction in foreign language classes *tends* to be quite superficial (Ivers, 2005, 2007; Morain, 1983; Webber, 1987). They generally discuss issues such as French bread, the Autobahn, and Jennifer López. As their students leave their classrooms with a greater knowledge of French bread, they walk out into a hallway full of cultural land mines. Anything we can do to deepen our instruction, and familiarize our students with the often irrational power of culture, can better assist them in navigating the often difficult terrain of life. Knowing that Jennifer López is famous and is Hispanic, is not going to create greater flexibility in thinking, deeper cognitive abilities, or create individuals who can change the world.

Cultural Oppression and Self-Concept

Since self-esteem is largely culture-bound, a deeper understanding of the often arbitrary and artificial nature of cultural rules could theoretically assist the student in overcoming cultural influences that contribute to his or her low self-concept. The work of Paulo Freire on oppression can be related to the suffering faced by people who do not conform to cultural dogma.

Although Freire (1970) emphasized economic as well as political oppression to illuminate the plight of underprivileged individuals, his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, forces us to examine what could be termed cultural oppression. Cultural oppression is probably active in all social settings to one degree or another. We see it often in the schools where the non-athletic, the non-beautiful, the non-wealthy, and the non-popular live lives bereft of culturally granted emotional privileges. Students must be provided with educational opportunities that will allow them to liberate themselves from cultural prisons and enable them to be more proactive in creating their own self-concept rather unconditionally accepting the potentially injurious one created for them by the group who has co-opted the popularity. In order to assist students in obtaining higher levels of psychological well-being, it might be advantageous that they understand that their discomfort and insecurities may not be the result of inherent inferiority but rather evidence of cultural irrationality.

Freire (1970) writes, "Liberation is thus a childbirth, and a painful one" (p. 33). Liberation from cultural messages engendered almost from birth can be a taxing transition. These often arbitrary cultural guidelines become seemingly less arbitrary and more concrete as we ingratiate ourselves in any given environment. Thus freeing ourselves from these norms is very difficult being that we do not view them as constructs but rather as absolutes.

Those who are culturally oppressed (probably all of us to one degree or another) for whatever reasons feel what Freire (1970) would term an "irresistible attraction" (p. 49) to those who are the beneficiaries of cultural rewards. Culturally oppressed individuals often invest a big share of their precious lives attempting to mimic the culturally privileged and take part in their lifestyles. For example, people develop eating disorders, consume harmful substances targeted at improving athletic performance, expose themselves to cancer-causing UVA and UVB rays, along with a slew of other destructive activities as ways to conform to socially created irrationalities.

Many young people have the idea that everything the dominant culture says is right despite how absurd it really is! Ozman and Craver (1986) comment,

> The oppressor is whoever or whatever serves as an overriding influence that is uncritically accepted or chosen by the oppressed. In Freire's view, oppression will be present wherever one's consciousness is characterized by the condition 'in which to be is to be like, and to be like is to be like the oppressor.' Oppression is, or forces, passivity, and there may be a degree of security in passivity, for nothing is risked. For Freire, however, an education that liberates is painful, for like a childbirth it brings a new person into the world. (p. 208)

Self-deprecation resulting from less than inviting cultural messages is difficult to ameliorate. It becomes quite difficult to accept positive things about oneself after an unflattering self-image is inculcated. We need to instill in our students a little less faith in the cultural proscriptions that continually bombard them. Students need to become "masters of their own thinking" (Freire, 1970, p. 118) instead of falling victim to culturally created standards that may only serve to impair them.

What Should Be Taught?

In a recently published article, Ivers (2007) lamented the superficiality of culture topics treated in the schools. We will again use foreign language classes as an example. He noticed that the typical college Spanish textbooks included cultural topics *such as* food, population figures, bullfighting, soccer, celebrities, music, traditional dances, and holidays.

There is nothing wrong with the above topics, but Ivers (2007) proposed that a little depth could be added to the typically covered areas. The topics don't necessarily have to be for just foreign language classes but could also be utilized in classes in Social Studies, Anthropology, Psychology, English Composition, English Literature, Geography, and probably many others. It is our opinion that deep culture can also be used in counseling, which we will discuss later. Some potentially more consciousness raising cultural issues that can be explored in such classes might be differences in world views concerning beauty, romantic behavior, tolerance for emotional expression, treatment of old people, materialism, respect afforded different professions, attributions concerning success or failure, what is the good life, etc.

Some of the best subject areas we have found for intercultural comparison, and interesting classroom discussion, have been found in the statements of foreign anthropologists who have come to the United States and studied Americans. We understand that the word *American* is problematic, however that is the word the foreign anthropologists used so we will use it here in the colloquial, albeit narrow, use of the term. In her study of Americans, Cerroni-Long (1993) made some observations with which we don't *totally* agree but are instructive nonetheless. She felt that Americans were not very deep intellectually. She found their personalities to be self-promoting and undercutting to potential competitors. She felt that Americans possessed an insulting sense of humor that could be interpreted as jockeying for position or even social flagellation that could be a carry-over from Puritanism or some other sort of socially induced inferiority complex. She described American culture as kind of like a war zone, extant with problems coping, personal insecurity and individual isolation. Cerroni-Long, before her visit to America, had spent some time in the former Soviet Union. She came to the conclusion that conforming to the *right* ideology is just as important in certain American social circles as it was in the former communist block nations.

Another foreign anthropologist, Wasserfall (1993) felt that in America there is no cultural room for anguish, fear, angst, or ambiguity. People were uncomfortable with ambiguity and also had to hide their insecurities behind pure image. A Dutch anthropologist, Pinxten (1993), claims that the American intellectual is basically dead. He says that the typical professor in America takes too much of a business-like approach to knowledge production and publishing, and the re-

sult of all that is *extreme boredom*. He claims that our *current* intellectual soil is not rich enough for inspirational, deep, and thrilling ideas to flourish.

So How Do You Teach All This Stuff?

In 1987, one of the authors had a conversation with some foreign friends that changed his professional life. It all started with a simple question he posed. It was, "What are some of the weird things Americans do?" The friends started talking and did not stop for a good while. The co-author, a doctoral student at the time, had recently experienced a class lecture on detecting *tacit assumptions*. Tacit assumptions are the implicit messages residing within statements. They are usually not immediately obvious, yet they provide the foundational assumptions (sometimes dubious), upon which the declaration is based. Let us look at some of the tacit assumptions behind some of the statements by the foreign friends that the co-author wrote down. Most of the statements are edited to enhance their conciseness.

Statement: "In America we see men helping in the laundromat and in the kitchen. In our country, if a man were to help in the kitchen he is no longer a man."
Tacit Assumptions: The man must be in control. If he doesn't exploit his female partner, she will dominate him.

Statement: "Too many women work in America. In my country a question is often asked, 'If you are so much a man, why does your wife have to work?' Another saying is that the woman who earns a significant amount of money is 'more man than her husband.'"
Tacit Assumptions: Making money is basically only a man's role. A real man provides for all his family's needs by himself. A real man will not have economic problems.

Statement: "In America there is no life in your celebrations and you never get excited about anything. When I attend church services here, it is boring."
Tacit Assumptions: Lack of outward emotional expression is a sign of lack of enthusiasm.

Statement: "Unlike Americans, people in my country work to live and enjoy, not just to possess. People don't enjoy their work here. There is a time for everything. Work isn't everything. It is just one thing."
Tacit Assumptions: Work is to be enjoyed rather than endured. The purpose of life is to experience rather than to accumulate stuff.

Statement: "In America, older, adult children often have to pay room and board in their own homes! The parents even encourage them to move out! Don't the parents love their children here?"
Tacit Assumptions: Familial closeness is more important than personal independence.

The instructor can use actual statements or can simply explain the target culture's world view and have the students, in groups or in the class as a whole, work on uncovering the tacit assumptions that sustain such a view. The view of the *native culture* should also be addressed with the tacit assumptions supporting its foundation excavated and analyzed. The students should then debate the positives and negatives of both views. It could be that neither view is inviting and each may lack fairness, kindness, and/or rationality. Under those circumstances, the students could possibly invent alternative

views that, if followed, could create a better, more inviting world in which to live. If students come up with, in their opinions, more inviting, honorable, and equitable models of reality, they can be encouraged to live their lives with those new models in place. People living their lives in accordance with just and rational models can contribute, at least in a small way, in helping their culture to become a more pleasant realm and can assist in fomenting individual happiness.

Another potential instructional approach also hails from the deeper, psychological realm. Albert Ellis, one of the 20th Century's preeminent psychologists, developed what he called Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy. Part of the therapy involves recognizing irrationalities in one's own life that, by exercising their powerful yet questionable influence, can unreasonably cause one to experience emotional pain and discomfort (Ellis & Harper, 1997; Ellis, 2001; Rector, 2004). For example, an essential element in Ellis' approach is his ABC Theory of self-disturbing. An approximate diagram of the concept is as follows:

A. Event/Circumstance ----> B. Beliefs ------> C. Consequent Reactions

When used cross-culturally, such a model, with similar A's, will often create vastly different C's. Some cultures have B's that are more rational, inviting, kind, and just than others. We could look at Ellis' ABC concept in the metaphor of a chemical reaction. A is a substance which could be inert, benign, innocuous, until combined with B where, if combined with the wrong B, it can result in a destructive and explosive C. Following are some A's that, filtered through a vast universe of divergent cultural B's, can bring on C's that vary significantly in *degree* and sometimes even in *kind*.

Comments concerning one being overweight
Personal physical characteristics
Public praise and recognition
Disobedience of children
Being the recipient of certain criticisms
High or low expressiveness of emotion in others
Financial struggles
"Need" to achieve a higher social class
Lack of stylistic clothes
Loss of personal independence or productivity
Personal space issues
Why did this bad thing happen?
Silence
Body odor
Nepotism
Romantic behavior
Accumulation of possessions
Modesty (physical and social)
Friendliness
Ambiguity
Respect afforded different social classes
Respect afforded different achievements
Lack of certain specific achievements
Lack of order

In groups, the students can play with the ABC concept by plugging in different real or potential beliefs (B's) and seeing what reactions (C's) would naturally result. This, again, will allow them to test the rationality of diverse cultural models and, maybe for the first time, critically examine their own. If the students find their native cultural models to be wanting, they can examine ways to change their personal thinking to help to create a better emotional life for themselves and possibly a more just world.

Cross-Cultural Instruction and Counseling

There is no doubt that Ellis' ABC concept can be a tool for counselors as well as teachers. No one can doubt the importance of methods in counseling that will serve to enhance the client's recognition of elements that impair his or her self-concept. The professions of psychology and counseling have long recognized the powerful influences of culture on people's self-esteem. Humanistic Psychology and Multicultural Counseling and Therapy, for example, have illustrated the power of culture to influence individuals, both positively and negatively. Humanistic psychology was created as a reaction to behaviorism and psychoanalysis in an attempt to develop a more holistic approach to understanding and counseling humans.

Abraham Maslow, one of the major theorists in humanistic psychology, developed a theory of human development and a hierarchy of human needs. The highest stage of development in Maslow's hierarchy is called self-actualization. People who attain self-actualization, according to Maslow, make up less than 1% of the population and have certain traits, values, and behaviors in common (Maslow, 1970).

One particular trait of self-actualized people is an ability to recognize the positive and negative aspects of their culture and therefore refuse to participate in the negatives as far as they affect others and themselves. And along with that, self-actualized people are not adversely affected when they do not measure up to unnecessary culturally created artificial needs (Maslow, 1970).

Multicultural Counseling and Therapy (MCT) also works from a contextual perspective. Clients and their problems are not viewed in isolation, but in a cultural context. Clients also are conceptualized as moving through different stages of cultural consciousness. These stages include *pre-encounter*, *encounter*, *immersion/emersion*, and *internalization* (Ivey, Ivey, Myers, & Sweeney, 2005; Ivey, 1995).

Individuals in the *pre-encounter* stage of cultural awareness tend to have little or no cognizance about how their culture influences them. They are in a place of "naiveté with acceptance of the status quo" (Ivey et al., 2005, p. 256). Counselors working with these clients may employ various types of sensorimotor questions to help increase their cultural awareness. For example, clients may come into counseling exhibiting very low self-esteem, and the counselor may ask them to describe a situation in which they felt particularly vulnerable. The counselor may help the clients to describe the situation by asking specific questions, such as:

> "What are you seeing (in the situation where you feel vulnerable)?
> "What are you hearing?"
> "What are people saying?"
> "What are you feeling in your body?"

As clients gain awareness of what they are seeing, hearing, experiencing, and feeling, they become more aware of their cultural context, and move towards the *encounter* stage of cultural awareness.

In Ivey's *encounter* stage, clients begin to gain awareness of their culture and how it affects them. They also begin to put names to their experiences. For example, the client with low self-esteem might name his or her particular situation "inadequacy" or "not

sizing up to others' expectations." When a name is given to a particular situation it becomes more tangible and allows clients to recognize other similar circumstances in which they felt, for example, "inadequate." When clients are able to recognize patterns of similar cultural situations, they move to Ivey's *immersion/emersion* stage of cultural awareness. In this stage, clients are able to not only recognize similar situations or patterns, but also reflect on what these patterns say about them as a person or about their particular culture, community, or group. Questions counselors may use to elicit pattern development and reflection are:

> "How is this situation similar to others that you have experienced?"
> "What does this pattern say about you or your culture?"

As clients gain more awareness of patterns related to particular situations, they become more able to see other perspectives.

Being able to think dialectically, or seeing situations from multiple perspectives, is a key aspect of Ivey's *internalization* stage of cultural awareness. Useful questions to help people move to this stage might be:

> "How would this situation look differently from a different cultural perspective?"
> "What belief were you operating under when you felt (for example) inadequate?
> "Where did this belief come from?"
> "What flaws can you see in this cultural belief?"
> "How can you change it?" and
> "How do you imagine your life being different without that culturally created belief?"

As people recognize other perspectives and gain awareness of irrational and unhealthy culturally created realities, they become more able to *liberate* themselves from these unhealthy beliefs, as Ivey (1995) describes it, and create new and healthier realities.

Aspects of MCT techniques also may be incorporated into classroom settings. For example, instructors using MCT may describe a particular story or situation in which potentially uninviting culturally constructed beliefs are present. In the telling of the story or situation, instructors pay particular attention to detail such as describing what people might be saying in this particular situation, what they might be hearing, and what they might be feeling. Of course, participation from the class using thought-stimulating questions is recommended. Next, instructors can help the class give the situation or problem a name, and describe different scenarios in which similar circumstances have played out. Then, instructors can demonstrate how the same situation might play out differently in different cultures with different culturally constructed beliefs. Finally, instructors can divide the class into small groups to discuss what the culturally created belief might be, and how the belief might be changed or modified to cultivate improved self-concepts.

Conclusion

Socrates said, "the unexamined life is not worth living." The unexamined culture may also not be worth living. When people do not critically examine their own culture, they become unknowing agents of the prevailing cultural consciousness. Cultural instruction, if done with the above psychological principles in mind, can lead our students into creating more endogenous world

views rather than being automatized into exogenous, potentially deleterious views of others and of themselves. It is also likely they will be provided with mental models that will enrich their overall cognitive lives. Einstein said, "Only daring speculation can lead us further and not accumulation of facts" (Magee, 2006, p. 221). Researchers into good teaching are now saying that successful teachers are the ones who explore the great questions, new paradigms, and interesting uncertainties (Bain, 2004; Nilson, 1998). The fields of teaching and counseling could be enhanced by more critical analysis of disinviting cultural paradigms, greater depth, and more daring speculation.

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Coloring in the Emotional Language of Place

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Making educational places more inviting to learners is a key aspect of Invitational Theory. This paper introduces a simple technique for sensitizing learners and instructors to how their environment affects their feelings and ability to learn. It describes a learning exercise that may be used to assess, evaluate and transform places, to promote either calm reflection or creative energy as well as some experience based on three years of application in a college-level Geography course. The approach, founded in the Sāmkhya–Yoga conception of the three modes of material nature, asks learners detect the roles of Sattva (peace, harmony, tranquility, awareness), Rajas (energy, action, creativity, destructiveness) and Tamas (inert, veiled, ignorance) working together in their habitat and to think about how this balance may be adjusted to positive effect. Learners found the approach novel but many welcomed this new way of envisioning their world.

Place is one of the five arms of Invitational Education; one of its "Powerful Ps" (Purkey and Novak, 1996). It is also a central concern for the ecology of education and critical to the creation of places conducive to thinking, study, and reflection (Biggs, 2003). For better or worse, educational environments, especially the microenvironments of the campus and classroom, "make a difference in learners' lives" (Moos, 1979, p273). Hence, it is worthwhile having those same learners reflect upon how their habitat affects their feelings and about what they might do to change them for the benefit of themselves and others. This paper offers a simple technique that might be used by learners and instructors for the evaluation of learning spaces and, indeed, all places and situations.

Normally, the impacts of places upon our feelings and behavior are overlooked. For example, many university instructors work away in their offices amidst heaps of paper, largely oblivious to the stress this clutter causes. Then, one day, the mess is removed; magically, they feel more positive, more calm (Boniwell, 2006). Of course, similar processes work in the outside world. The places that we inhabit "speak to us" and they affect the way we feel. Sometimes, these messages are deliberate: retailers entice us to buy, banks to convince that they are trustworthy, overpriced hotels that they are 'high class' etc. Sometimes the messages are not deliberate, like the litter and dilapidation that speak of neglect. Our habitats are full of signs and signals, many of them transmitting subliminal messages. Indeed, there is an industry, both within academia and without, devoted to the creation, manipulation and interpretation of these signals—semiotics, marketing, etc (e.g. Twitchell, 2004).

Geography is a discipline deeply concerned with landscape and place, not least the *sense of place*, meaning its personality (Tuan, 2004). In the process, it has evolved a subdiscipline, *Psychogeography*, part of Cultural Geography, which explores the emotional impact of places (Coverley, 2006). This paper concerns an out-of-class experi-

ence; a *Psychogeographic* exercise that encourages learners to consider the ways that places affect their emotional state, to develop empathy for the places they inhabit and, because the exercise is created as team activity, to build up their emotional intelligence by considering the way these places affect the feelings of others.

This exercise, called "The Speaking Stones" is set in Oxford, England, and aims to alert learners to the ways that nonverbal signals affect their feelings and to engage them in constructive thoughts about remaking their world by creating places that promote either energy and action or peace and reflective contemplation.

Of course, the design of this exercise is affected by its context—not the "dreaming spires" of Oxford, but rather the legacies of Empire, the economy of the New Europe and the growth of the international market in Education. England has become a multicultural place and classes—a cosmopolitan mix of different ethnicities and religious groups. However, curricula remain British to the core, rarely straying beyond the Anglo-American or West European (Haigh, 2002). This creates a mismatch between the cultural range of the learners and the curriculum that is beginning to worry instructors. Their responses, often headed "Internationalization of the Curriculum" or "Widening Participation," are about engaging with other cultures. One route is to include ideas from outside the Western pale and promote intercultural understanding by allowing time to ideas from minority communities.

Here, this approach has a practical advantage. The Speaking Stones exercise is part of an advanced level UK undergraduate course, called *The Ethical Geographer*, taught jointly by the author and colleague, Dr. Adrian Parker, which enrolls 60-90 final year undergraduates annually. The course aims to help Geography learners become reflective practitioners, to draw together their undergraduate learning, to understand their self and its worlds, and help them prepare for transition to the world of work (Teichler, 2003, 2004). Constructed on four pillars: ethics, empathy, environment and employment; the special role of this Speaking Stones exercise is to support the empathy pillar (Boyd et al., 2008).

However, this course's learners come from diverse academic backgrounds. Some begin with a strong grounding in Cultural Geography but many are Physical Geography or Environmental Science specialists with little experience of Cultural Geography. How to invite a whole class without showing preference to those with prior training in Cultural Geography? How to invite a whole class without showing preference to those with local British roots? Well, the thought is that a small step outside the Western cultural tradition might solve both problems.

So, the Speaking Stones exercise borrows a little from India's culture and philosophy. Of course, Western thought is grounded in the material world and derives consciousness as its product, while the starting point for much Indian philosophy is consciousness and from this the material world is derived (Jacobsen, 1992). In truth, this idea of a mind-made world meshes nicely with perceptual approaches like Invitational Theory and Cultural Geography. However, the Speaking Stones exercise comes from Sāmkhya, one of six major Schools (*Darsana*) of Indian Philosophy; one closely linked to Yoga and Hindu scripture, especially the Bhagavadgita—a text often caricatured as the

Hindu New Testament (Larson, 1979). Now, this may sound formidable and arcane but, in fact, the ideas borrowed are very simple. The essence is that Sāmkhya considers the whole phenomenal universe to be the product of just three qualities, modes, or strands. These are the three "Gunas." Sattva Guna is the essence of everything light, serene and pure, Rajas Guna of everything active, every desire, passionate, creative and destructive process, while Tamas Guna is the essence of everything inert, heavy, banal, obstructing, and dull. The easiest way of understanding this is to consider a color photograph, which is created from pixels of just three primary colors. It does not matter what the photograph portrays, be it jelly beans, jaguars or Jacksonville, the three colors are the same. Similarly, these Gunas act as the primary colors for the whole of material creation.

Sāmkhya argues that the Gunas construct, control, and compose everything. All the Speaking Stones exercise does is to invite learners to share with their peers an exploration of their local habitat that identifies those places that promote peacefulness and reflection (Sattva), energy and creativity (Rajas), or inertia and depression (Tamas). The task is completed by their explanation of why and how these feelings are stimulated by the places they observe and a consideration of what might be done to change these places for the better?

Three Gunas in Food, Art and Education

Possibly, the Guna concept needs more illustration? Here follow three: the Gunas represented as food (according to Ayurvedic medicine) and as manifest in artistic creation and learning.

First foods, these are Sattvic if they are fresh, juicy, nourishing, sweet and sustain the body without stress (e.g. fresh fruits, vegetables, fresh milk and butter, sprouted beans, grains, nuts, pulses). By contrast, Rajasic foods are energising and challenging; they are bitter, sour, salty, pungent, and spicy (fried, curried, shellfish, salsa, chips). However, Tamasic foods are lazy, devoid of nutritional value, pre-processed and/or unhealthy (e.g. anything in a can, *instant* food, snack pack, caffeinated, alcoholic or fatty like red meat) (Johari, 2000).

Second actions, these are also conditioned by the three Gunas working in concert. Suppose a Sculptor feels invited to make a figurine of Gaia, the Greek Goddess of the Earth, who is honored in the word Geography. First Sattvic inspiration appears—the vision of a final perfect form. Inspired, the Sculptor engages Rajas and selects a lump of stone. This is inert, formless, an obstacle to be overcome—so it represents Tamas—so does the feeling that, "I remember my last attempt, it was hard work, it may not turn out well—why bother?" With luck, Rajasic creativity comes to the rescue and the sculptor goes to work, shaping the stone with hammer, chisel, hard-work, determination and sweat. Finally, success, an image of the Goddess is claimed from the stone. The sculptor and sculpted are at peace; the goal is realized, serene, beautiful, Sattvic (Prabhavananda and Isherwood, 1948). Note that here, all three Gunas play a part. Sattva in isolation might remain a pleasant but unrealized dream, while Rajas without Sattva would be merely undirected energy. Similarly, Rajas without Tamas, would be like a lever without a fulcrum—it needs something inert but malleable to struggle against.

Third, yes, even learning may be explored in

terms of the changing balance between the Gunas. The process begins in Tamas: ignorance, inertia, hopelessness and lack of self-belief; everything that discourages learners from creative thought or study. To overcome this negativity, some Sattvic inspiration is required and so is a great deal of Rajasic enthusiasm and energy. Rajas is motivated action; it involves focus, classification, analysis, the development of skills and projects. Eventually, however, learners need more than Rajas, they need to grasp the big picture. A Sattvic vision sees things as a whole; it guides creativity, synthesis, and overview. Sattva offers appreciation of underlying unities and recognition of the transitory and changing nature of all material things (cf. Bhagavadgita 18.20-22 in Prabhupada, 1972). Clearly, you could dream up a whole curriculum based on these ancient foundations (e.g. Haigh, 2009).

"Name that Guna": A Preparatory Exercise

Meanwhile, back in the classroom, despite such illustration, a class needs to work with this new idea ahead of trying to apply it in the field. Of course, it is nice to be able to teach with a song (or some music anyway). In this case, class preparation involves music, helpfully sourced from a Batman movie sound track. Snippets of 3-5 tunes are played. One is punk rock (*Smash it Up!*), one is painfully romantic (*Kiss from a Rose*), another is very calm and meditative (*The Temple*).

"OK, please tell your neighbor in class, which Guna or Gunas do these tunes most represent?" Tamas with Rajas, Rajas, Sattva, come the answers. Fine, except one student is deaf and feels left out. "So, please turn round and watch the class with me, you'll be amazed." When the punk rock is played, the class is loud and jittery, when the ambient music plays they are quiet and relaxed, and when the romantic music is played, they are focused but distracted. No sound is needed to prove the point—those Gunas are in control.

The Speaking Stones: An Out-of-Classroom Experience

So, since everything and anything may be explored through the three Gunas, why not ask learners go out and try to understand which Gunas control their own habitats? Of course, the Geography discipline is about the self and its places; Geographers endlessly eulogize *landscape* and are fixated upon maps (Tuan, 2004). So, a geography class is easily persuaded that really, deep down, they would like to create a map, even a mental map. (A mental map is a one based on perception rather than land survey like Steinberg's famous "View of the World from Ninth Street" cover for *The New Yorker* (Steinberg, 1976)). In this case, they use the map as the core of a poster that depicts the expression of the three Gunas in some of their own places (Table 1). The Gunas express feelings, so this task asks learners to see selected local and campus places using empathy as their torch. In the fashionable jargon of the day, they are invited to deconstruct their habitat in terms of its dominant emotional message. Does it signal harmony, peace and well-being (Sattva), energy, passion, power and/or creativity (Rajas) or dullness, inertia, delusion and depression (Tamas)?

Of course, different people see the world in different ways, so the class is formed into small teams and asked to work together. If they cannot negotiate a collective view then,

at least, they should try to explore the range of views that exists among them and the reasons for their differences. Here, the exercise touches on some rather fundamental issues about whether the individual is the one who makes the *sense of place* or whether the place is truly affecting the individual, and if so why? Is it something to do with its appearance, its history—which may be a personal matter of good or bad associations, or its cultural significance, or the utility of something it contains? Are there aspects of this that are shared or is the effect primarily personal?

When the poster and its map are completed, individuals prepare written reports. There are three tasks to consider. First, they evaluate the differences in viewpoint experienced within their team with the reasons for them and the ways they were resolved. Second, they consider how the character of the place they evaluated might be changed. A third part of the exercise asks them to suggest how they might redesign part of their own habitat, either to encourage peaceful contemplation and serenity (Sattva), or engaged action and energy (Rajas).

Perceptions, Places, and Psychogeographic Situations

Invitational theory is one of very few theories of education that recognize the importance of place in the ecology of education (Purkey and Novak, 1996). However, getting the emotional signals of a place right should rank among the more important considerations in the constructive alignment of education (Biggs, 2003). Learning places should feel inviting; they should help learners (and even instructors) feel welcome, comfortable and at home within them. They should not be physical contradictions of the messages from the instructors if they are to provide a positive psychosocial environment where learners can thrive (Boniwell, 2006; Haigh, 2008).

Table 1
The Speaking Stones—Exploring the Emotional Language of Place: Team Exercise Brief.

1. Please sign yourself into a team of 3-5; preferably, of people you do not yet know very well, i.e. not those you sit next to in class. (You will find *different perspectives* useful in this exercise).
2. A list of target areas follows – please have your team sign for ONE of the following on this list... (The list of areas used includes: different parts of the college campus, the local shopping centre, the city centre, a housing estate, an industrial area, a recreational area, river bank etc).
3. Please prepare an A2 sized poster (or web-page) to show the dominant emotional colours (Gunas) within your selected locale. Hint: remember your environment includes the insides of building as well as the world outside.
4. Your presentation should include a mental map that depicts the dominant Guna(s) in different parts of your area and captions that justify your depictions, which could be supplemented by illustrations (photographs, sketches, diagrams). Your work should be ready for class presentation in two weeks.
5. When you create your Poster, as a team please, consider how the places you have studied may be made more inviting and positive, either for Sattvic reflection or Rajasic creativity, and be prepared to discuss your conclusions in class.

However, getting these signals right is a difficult task with problems that the Speaking Stone exercise's more thoughtful participants also address. Places are personal. Psychologists find that individuals screen their views of place through three filters: attachment to valued places, familiarity, and identity—the link between a person's self-image and their habitat (Fullilove, 1996). Others recognize the impacts of wider transferred experience, social attitudes, and behavioral intentions—the personal utility of a place (Stedman, 2002). A place may also contain icons of personal or cultural significance, perhaps unrecognized by others. Auburn and Barnes (2006) call this the 'problem of sociality' and protest that current understanding does not cover the processes by which places achieve agreed social value. Their partial solution, based on Schutz's phenomenology of the social world, addresses inter-subjective understanding, the *We-Self* rather than the *I-Self*, and the social construction of place ethos through typification (Auburn and Barnes, 2006; Coward, 2000).

Meanwhile, in Geography, concern about the *sense of place* spawned Psychogeog-raphy. Early Situationist Psychogeographers likened a city walk to the experience of a cinema or circus spectacle (Coverley, 2006). Like actors, each building performs a character defined by money, prestige, success, or failure. It speaks of hopes and dreams, and its costumes send quiet messages that concern power, dominance, enthusiasm, satisfaction, decay, grief, and so forth. Recognizing the subconscious impacts of these messages, the Situationists sought to cultivate an awareness of the ways that such signals conditioned and manipulated minds and emotions (Plant, 1992). They also wondered how the spectacle could be transformed, humanized for social benefit (Ford, 2005).

Their first problem was to create awareness. This involved detaching people from their everyday preoccupations and helping them see their habitats with open minds. Detachment has long been considered a prerequisite for understanding the world (Huppes, 2001, pp 77-78). In fact, Sāmkhya's core text, the 4th Century Sāmkhyakarika, verses 57-61 runs as follows:

> 57. Just as non-conscious milk is secreted to nourish the conscious calf, so the material world (Prakriti) is manifested for the purpose of enlightenment. 58. Just as people perform acts to relieve their anxieties and longings, so Prakriti is energized for the purpose of enlightenment. 59. Just as a dancer will conclude her performance after displaying herself on the stage, so Prakriti displays herself and then withdraws. 60. The benevolent Prakriti consists of the three gunas. She has no interest of her own to fulfill…61…When she recognizes "I have now been understood" she withdraws...(Larson, 1979, pp 272-274).

In sum, to understand, you have to detach yourself sufficiently from the mundane to see things as they are. The Situationists' technique was the *"Dérive"*. In the 1990s, our local version involved having learners use dice to direct their path through the city. In France, others tried to navigate using a map from some other place. The intention was to help the observer experience the city with new eyes and gain detachment sufficient to detect and critique its subliminal messages; to see the city as a system of desires and emotional colors.

> We begin to walk. We feel the ground beneath our feet, the wind in our face. And as we do, we leave

> traces. We are involved in the landscape … the unintentional, the random, the intimate … places without firm boundaries, places which perhaps only the poet can map (Pearson and Shanks, 2005, p1).

Of course, these days, such work can be emulated from the desk top, simply by surfing through the bizarre suburban chimera of the virtual world of Second Life. Here, as in Sāmkhya, you gain enlightenment when you stop wasting your time and switch the illusion off.

However, there are less drastic ways of dealing with negative environments; you can simply make them better. *Détournement* was the Situationist technique for *turning around* the negative qualities of an environment. This included spray painting billboards to expose their inherent nature and reconstructing hostile or threatening spaces into positive social environments (cf. Haigh, 2004).

Well, Psychogeography is called many things: arty, elitist, lefty, occult, French, Marxist, bourgeois intellectual, and ultimately unsuccessful (Plant, 2005). All of this is true. However, it remains influential and survives as an interesting toy box of strategies for exploring human habitats (Hart, 2004). This paper adds one more toy.

Learners' Voices

So, at heart, the Speaking Stones Exercise is an old fashioned exercise in Psychogeography. It tasks participants to empathize with a physical place and recognize the ways it interacts with their feelings and the emotions of others. It explores the affectiveness of the material environment, both intentional and unintentional. It suggests to learners that, if only they make the effort, anyone can detect these impacts and understand how they work. Further, it suggests that they may also discover what to do to make places more inviting and more positively affective for those who live and work within them. The exercise asks them to represent the results of their studies as a team and through individual reflective statements on their teamwork and upon their ideas for creating a better, either energizing or reflective, environment. The only novelty is the tool they use for this work—the three Gunas.

Thus far, in three years of replication, 22 student teams, around 90 individuals, have tackled this task. Their map-posters have, of course, varied in quality. There have been gleaming, glossy, brochure-style productions, some socially-conscious junk-models composed of thrown away paper plates and litter, and some slapdash collages. There have been posters that impressed with a dramatic visual concept and others no better than essays pinned to a poster board. There were posters that demonstrated deep reading and reflection and some containing no evidence of any personal investment in scholarship. Finally, there were some that were the result of careful teamwork and cooperation, some that were predominantly the work of a single team leader, and some that were confused and haphazard demonstrations of a team's failure to gel.

For the first two years especially, most teams focused on the character of the university campus and engaged quite fully with the Gunas concept. Unfortunately, in year three, several teams produced weaker posters that favored the shopping streets in Oxford's suburbs. In one case, a telltale list of irrelevant references made it clear that

thinking had been unhelpfully cross-fertilized from a lower level course that dealt with the regeneration of retail areas. Meanwhile, poster content has remained fairly predictable. In general, shops and busy roads are loaded heavily on Rajas, gardens, and churches on Sattva, car parks, graffiti, litter and dereliction on Tamas. Several higher quality posters showed how the Gunas work together while others tried to classify every situation into one or another.

In the first year, two groups innovated by introducing a clock to their posters. In one case, this showed that one wooded part of campus, considered peaceful and Sattvic during the day, became busily Rajasic in peak hours but threatening and Tamasic after dark. Another team extended the thought to everyday life, pointing out that people also exhibit different dominant Gunas during different phases of their daily and weekly routines.

Similarly, many of the recipes for change were predictable and familiar: paint, clear litter, repair, plant trees in concrete places, light dark alleys and corners at night, clear away clutter, improve the soundscape with Nature or running water rather than car engines, reduce motor traffic, clean up the air, open up vistas and cover up the fading concrete of campus buildings. If there was a general pattern, it was that the plans emphasized the human experience rather than any architects dream The focus, for on-campus teams, was learners' needs for quiet places to think, discuss, read or study; for off-campus teams, their wish for safe, energizing, social places to meet, eat, interact, and plan (Table2: S2.1 and 2.2).

These same themes were echoed in each learner's individual prescriptions for making changes in their own places—usually their room—sometimes the campus or city. One of the six elements of Invitational Education is empowerment (Schmidt. 2007). This is addressed in that part of the exercise that invites learners to change their personal places to meet their needs for either peace and reflection or energy and activity. Although, for at least one, all they sought was a place for some Tamasic rest (Table 2: S2.3). The Table 2 samples emerge from a cacophony of ideas, some developed with plans and photographs, about how personal spaces could be changed to strengthen their Rajasic or Sattvic effects (Table 2: 2.4-2.8).

Evaluation

At the end of each run of "The Ethical Geographer" participants complete a one-sheet, Course Consultation questionnaire with a small number of open questions. Its first question is a request to describe, as fully as they can, their experience of the course. A total of 88 responses have been retrieved with comments, both positive and negative, some expressing general feelings and some discussing particular aspects of the course.

Apparently, most found the course different to any experienced previously, the first to focus on their personal self and to ask them to reflect on their feelings. Thankfully, most call the course an enjoyable experience; the word *enjoyable* remains its most common epithet and *enjoyment* is one of the six key elements of Invitational Education (Schmidt, 2007). Assessed teamwork was its least popular aspect but common among the negative comments were those of the "I cannot see the point" variety. Sadly, several could not imagine how ethics or empathy might relate to either Geography or their future life. There were relatively few com-

plaints about the importation of ideas from outside Western culture. However, there remained a constituency in the course that did not *enlist* (Boyd et al., 2008; Schmidt, 2007).

As for the positive comments, naturally, most found those aspects of the course that most overtly sought to prepare them to approach future employers most valuable. More than half recognized that issues connected with ethics, empathy and environment had some bearing their future, while a similar number valued the *novelty* of having space created for them to reflect and think about themselves and their responsibilities. Another course exercise, which involved tree planting, was much mentioned, appreciated for its novelty value and future-oriented environmental message, while the Gunas exercise ranked third in comments both positive and negative (cf. Haigh, 2004).

Positive comments came from learners who recognized the importance of human feelings in social behavior and that this may be

Table 2 **Redesigning Learning Spaces: The Learners' Voices**
S2.1. "A Tamasic learning environment might have little natural light, include damaged furniture and so have a negative influence…"
S2.2. "A Sattvic environment would incorporate light reflecting surfaces such as chrome and glass and include flexible furnishings…"
S2.3. "My room is Tamasic... it is where I sleep. The lighting is dim. I have black and white pictures on the wall and the furniture is dark wood…"
S2.4. "My Tamasic room… benefits from no sunlight, it is surrounded by taller buildings and just outside my window is the place where all our rubbish is left. It is devoid of energy. . [Instead, I would create] an environment full of energy, passion, and creativity. The walls would be painted a bright color pictures and drapes would cover up the Tamasic and Sattvic… The pictures would be of energetic situations such as free climbing rock faces and surfing and also of inspiration al figures such as Che Guevara to inspire me to achieve all I can…"
S2.5. "... the strongest element of the new design is a prominent red wall, which acts of a focus point for my room. This increases Rajas by bringing energy and passion. Adding too much Rajas … would lead to an unsettled and restless mind… having lots of light and cream walls adds a calm and peaceful element... Tamas is often seen as negative but in fact it weans us from the old and lifeless…urging us to move on… so I have included pictures, which were of events that were fun and happy events and happiness is an element of Sattva".
S2.6. "My room has a relaxed calm feeling. The walls and carpets are a neutral cream/beige and the furniture is all light pine… To energize, it needs the injection of bold colors, bright rugs… plants, as they add a sense of life".
S2.7. "Sattva is associated with the color white and serenity. By embedding Sattva in a learning space, a calm productive environment can be created…. the incorporation of plants and flowing water features would soften the atmosphere".
S2.8. "My room is Sattvic... I am fortunate to have a large room which is spacious and light... The color scheme is white and crèmes and I have large windows. Its walls display photos of tranquil places. It has a calm and relaxing atmosphere... I would not transform it in any way.

affected by the qualities of place and from some who valued the other-cultural element. Negative comments came from those who required *objectivity* and a few who found the introduction of non-Western ideas to be inappropriate.

In 2007, the Course Consultation sheet also contained questions specifically about the exercise. These asked what do you believe was the intention of the exercise and what did you learn from your experience? The 36 analyses received find several learners recognizing an intention to make them more aware of the emotional impact of environments (Table 3: S3.1). Some went further to think about how they could control this impact (Table 3: S3.2).

Despite this, a majority of comments focused on mechanical aspects of the tasks. These suggested that the intention of the project was to help them build teamwork or presentation skills. A small group focused on the issue of interpersonal understanding: how others see their world and how different humans experience their worlds in such different ways. However, less than one in four addressed the issues of place, self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and habitat design. Suhotra (1996) tells a brief parable of a teacher, who seeing that the full moon is rising, directs a disciple to look toward a tree. The learner looks at the branches and worries that the light behind makes them silhouettes. It is not unusual in education, for method to obscure wider purpose.

Thankfully, the message was not lost to all. It resurfaced in the classroom during the student-lead discussion that was part of an informal peer-evaluation of posters. Here, several learners tried to link to the aims of The Ethical Geographer course. As Blackburn comments,

> Humans are ethical beings…We grade, evaluate, and compare and admire and claim and justify…We prefer that our preferences are shared; we turn them into demands upon on another…We hope for lives whose story leaves us looking admirable (Blackburn, 2001, p4).

In this case, class discussion turned, unbidden, toward linking the Gunas with issues of personal choice: where you live, how you live, what you read, and how you spend your

Table 3
The Purpose of the Speaking Stones Exercise: Some Learners Voices

S3.1 "It is about the attempt to understand, to experience, to feel things as another human person understands them. It is unlikely that a person ... will, or ever could, know what others actually feel. However, it is extremely important the action is made as it expresses a desire to try… The Gunas exercise taught me to evaluate the world in a more complex way"
S3.2 "... we learnt about empathy in a much less common context, that of empathizing with the environment… we need to empathize with our environment and realize that we have an obligation and responsibility towards its well being"
S3.3. "This aspect of the course encouraged me to analyze and more importantly empathize with my learning environment… enabling me to understand other external factors that may impact upon my ability to learn effectively".

time. What parts are Sattvic, Rajasic or Tamasic? Finally, as the class ended, talk turned to thoughts about the self and personal relationships at home and at work. An echo from this found its ways into one learner's personal statement as follows:

> I think the ability to empathize is very important… this section of the module has been my favorite… In my first year at University, I was a Tamas learner, however, in my second year I became very motivated to do well and became more of a Rajas learner and since coming back for my third year, I believe I am more of a Sattvic learner.

Discussion

Place is one of the five powerful "P's" of Invitational Education but, to create a more inviting place, you must first understand how that place makes people feel and what they need from it. Purkey and Novak (1996) identify three assumptions in their perceptual psychology approach. First, people behave according to their subjective perception of the qualities of their environment. Second, perceptions are learned, that they can change given new information and experience. Third, though reflective self-awareness, this change will be reflected in different behavior. Empathy, a kind of emotional intelligence, is central to understanding social behavior and the way it changes (Mayer and Salovey, 1993). However, empathy begins with self-awareness.

Sāmkhya and perceptual psychology agree: we create our own world and believe our personal world to be absolute reality. In fact, society accepts a wide array of these personal realities; they are negotiated norms, which differ from place to place and culture to culture but within boundaries. Those who stray beyond are ignorant, mad, dangerous, etc. Naturally, these personal realities massively affect individual and collective decisions about how to behave and, again, these issues worry folk in Geography. Elsewhere, the author helped colleague Jon Hellin explore the rationalities that encourage farmers in Central America, wisely it seems, to ignore the land management prescriptions of professional Soil Conservationists; and in another case, tried to help learners understand why the redevelopment of despoiled coal-lands in Wales causes controversy (Hellin and Haigh 2002; Haigh, 1996). Once again, the key is empathy, the ability to see the world a little bit as another may see it and to understand how that reality feels to them. Ultimately, every person's actions are guided by what they perceive and the feedback they receive from their habitat (Purkey and Novak, 1996).

As for ourselves, many teachers feel stress: "Stress is when your mouth says yes, whilst your guts are screaming no!" (Griffith, 2006). Currently, Britain's Higher Education is gripped by a pandemic of work-related stress, which the Unions attribute to management culture (Philips, 2007). This is creating a disinvitational environment for instructors, which exploits Tamasic feelings of helplessness and insecurity (Bachkirova, 2005). The sixth Powerful P may be *politics* but instructors are, typically, politically disempowered (Fink, 1992). However, in part, their problems are self-created—a Rajasic urge to do well pressed hard against an obdurate, Tamasic, reality (Haigh, 2008). If the world is mind-made, so also is stress. So, equally, are some remedies. Of course, instructors have limited room for maneuver but making small changes in the qualities of

that Powerful P—Place may be within reach. An easy anecdote comes to mind of a teacher who calmed the atmosphere in her classroom simply by putting lavender scent on the radiators each morning.

Invitational theory introduces its 'Five Ps' with the analogy of a starfish opening a clam (Purkey, 1999). This paper focuses on building up strength in just one of those arms through encouraging learners to reflect creatively on the arm of place. Of course, no starfish would attempt to achieve its goal with just one arm. Five arms make lighter work. Equally, this exercise and its Sattvic toolkit would likely be more beneficial were they part of a larger program. However, even in isolation, the approach seems to contain several benefits. First, it helps turns the spotlight of inquiry inwards; the exercise focuses participants on how they feel and why? Second, the teamwork element engages thinking about how others feel, act, and react. Finally, the exercise invites all involved to think about making their world a better place to live and empowers them by suggesting what they could do toward this.

In higher education, all many learners need is opportunity. They are Rajasic, self-motivated, driven by internal fires and self-belief. Others need help. Swami Vivekananda writes,

> Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in Humans. Therefore, the only duty of the teacher…is to remove all obstructions from the way....That is our duty, to clear the way. (Vivekananda, 1894, in Vivekananda, 1989, v4, p358).

For this writer, this is what invitational theory, this technique, and this Speaking Stones exercise is all about—removing Tamasic obstruction.

The question remains: does the approach succeed? At present, the answer is "somewhat." Of course, it is always difficult to ask busy people to slow down and think. Few of the learners, outside of the occasional New Ager, have been practiced in the arts of introspective reflection and several did not wish to be! Presently, most of our education is about purveying facts, theories, technical skills and engaging in the critical evaluation of 'others'. An important aspect of the critique of Western education from Neo-Vedanta Educators, such as Vivekananda, Tagore and Gandhi, is that it does not emphasize building personal character but rather instrumental, socially valued, capabilities and simple factual knowledge (Sharma, 2002). They say it produces automata by neglecting the inner self for the external world.

In this context, inviting learners to engage with their own feelings is an extraordinary thing. It asks for a personal response and pressures learners to find answers within themselves, which is often outside their comfort zone. So, it is not surprising that some do not want to be bothered and some become irritated because they cannot do what they usually do—read a couple of chapters, paraphrase them for an short term paper, regurgitate a few facts and quotations for an examination—familiar, easy, unaffective, activities that disturb them not at all.

One reviewer of this paper asks, in response to reports of students' enjoyment and avowed increased insight into their own values, if these positive responses came as a pleasant surprise? Certainly, they did, but

later this became mitigated by the realization only part of the class was pleased to accept this invitation to learn, while some regarded it as embarrassing or a waste of effort.

Of course, it is good to read positive evaluations and find that many, including most the more committed learners, found the Speaking Stones exercise a valuable opportunity to think constructively about making their world a better place in which to live. It was also nice to find that many learners found values in the course and this exercise that served their own career specific goals, which often include the ambition to succeed in a corporate setting. As for longer-term effects, anecdotal evidence suggests that some, especially those facing the trauma of annual reviews or working with new teams, later, recognized that this course had tried to give them a head start. A few took the Gunas to heart and began to use these ideas in their everyday lives. No doubt, others vaguely recall that "they did a strange exercise about the ways Indian people look at buildings," while, for some, this whole experience was "water under the bridge" by the end of the Semester, particularly among those who, for one reason or another, were not directly involved in the fieldwork.

Reviewers also ask: to what extent were colleagues influenced by this work and did it get them to reexamine their teaching? Well, times change. Years ago, my Department was a hot-bed of educational experimentation; staff never happier than when they had a new exercise to discuss or show off. Today, teaching has sunk down the agenda, overtaken first by research, later by administration and the need to find external funds to support a burgeoning bureaucracy. Now, experimentation is centrally planned, restricted to aspects of learning supported by funding, while the emphasis in teaching has shifted to processing the largest possible numbers with the least possible effort or angst, so creating time for other activities. Educational experimentation takes time and it is risky. In education, as in any walk of life, most innovations are not successful. Again, even the best experimental prototypes have problems—and sometimes learners react unsympathetically. In a system dominated by predatory administrators, an instructor would be well advised to take no chances. So, while echoes from some colleagues suggest that they find such work 'inspiring', the majority, wisely, keep to the beaten track. Fortunately, in this case, the core terminology is seductive; Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas are beginning to permeate the college vocabulary. It may be hoped that the larger message will follow.

Conventionally, constructive alignment means helping instructors align their curriculum with their desired learning outcomes, in terms other than those of subject knowledge, and helping learners to discover meaning in their work (Biggs, 2003). However, Biggs writes: "In aligned teaching, where all components support each other, students are trapped in to engaging in the appropriate learning activities" (Biggs, 2001, p 226), but *trap* seems too negative an image. The hope here is to create a positive ethos and a habitat that invites learners to engage themselves in quality learning. "As the means so the end…There is no wall of separation between the means and the end" (Gandhi, 1924; Richardson, 1982). Here, the goal is Sattvic self-awareness and reflection, enabled by the Rajas needed to effect change and, as that goal, so the means that the Speaking Stones exercise provides.

Invitations are a request for companion-

ship—a Sattvic signal. Invitational Theory may be rooted in John Dewey's democratic ethos and constructed through perceptual theory, but it is an applied field and hence, it is pragmatic and outcome oriented (Dewey and Ratner, 1939; Purkey and Stanley, 1991). Its intention is to shape the signals and signs that direct human self-belief toward better educational practice. One of this exercise's strengths is that it directs attention to the ways places affect human behavior. It provides a simple vehicle by which people can explore the effects of the environment on their own feelings. It exposes a self-created world to a key controller and embeds the aim of self-improvement.

Conclusion

Invitational theory is guided by Purkey's five 'Powerful P's of invitational practice that concern the people, policies, programs, processes and places, which together establish the ethos of education (Purkey, 1999). When these P's evoke positive feelings, a person is said to be "invited." In the ecology of education, invitational places are those that support positive learning.

The Speaking Stones exercise invites creative reflection upon place as one of those five powerful "Ps." Borrowing ideas from India's Sāmkhya Philosophy, it introduces the three Gunas, which are said to control and color everything in the material universe much as a photograph is created from dots of just three primary colors. These emotional primary colors are Sattva, which is light, pure, reflective, and serene, Rajas, which is active, creative, and dynamic, and Tamas, which is inert, veiled, and obstructing. Learners, formed into discussion groups, are invited to map their local environment in terms of its dominant Gunas and then, individually, to consider how their habitat may be made into more positive places for either Sattvic reflection or Rajasic creativity and interaction. Reports from those involved suggest that they enjoyed the task and that, in many cases, it initiated new creative thinking about the places they inhabit and the way they organize their lives.

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Easing Transitions of Military Dependents into Hawaii Public Schools: An Invitational Education Link

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Over 15,000 military dependent students attend Hawaii public schools, about 8% of the total student population. The transition to Hawaii schools has been identified by many military families as a challenge and one more difficult than other transitions their families have made. A generally acknowledged negative perception of Hawaii public schools among the military community worldwide does nothing to ease this transition, especially when schooling ranks near the top of military families' quality-of-life issues. Other factors that have made the transition difficult include cultural differences and some local school policies. This study draws on the following: federally funded research and programs to ease school transitions for military dependent students, five years of customer satisfaction surveys done with military families in Hawaii, and descriptions of the numerous programs and activities underway in the state. These programs and activities are sponsored jointly by the military and the Department of Education to welcome military dependent students into the public schools and provide them with a quality education. From a broad overview of the situation for military dependent students worldwide, this study hones in on efforts in Hawaii and the connections to the research literature including Invitational Education (IE). The study includes a description of the prevalence of IE at the University of Hawaii and its congruence with Hawaiian values as well as with the research on school connectedness that underlies much of the national-level effort at easing military student transitions.

Background

There are over half a million children of military families in the United States (Association of the United States Army [AUSA], 2001). These children move three times more often than other children and attend from six to nine schools during their K–12 school years (Military Child Education Coalition [MCEC], 2001). Moving every 1 to 4 years, military families live all over the United States and the world. These families have all the same hopes, dreams, and needs as other American families, among them the education and welfare of their children. However, unlike most of our citizens, military families have no choice in where they live, work, and raise their families. Additionally, they live with the uncertainty and stress that attends having a parent mobilized for duty in dangerous places whenever called (*USA4 Military Families,* n.d.).

Military families have needs that cannot be fulfilled by the Department of Defense (DoD) or any agency at the federal level. Educational issues, especially, can and often should only be addressed by changes in state policy or by civic and educational leaders in local communities. These issues include, for example, access to athletic and academic programs that generally have qualification requirements or try-outs and program entry only at the beginning of the season or school year, thus making them inaccessible to students who arrive mid-year. Needs and issues

involving education have always been at or near the top of any list of issues and concerns of military families (USA4 Military Families, n.d.).

Through the Department of Defense Education Activity—DoDEA—the federal government does provide an excellent school system for dependents of military personnel stationed overseas. There are Department of Defense Dependent Schools—DoDDS—in Europe and in the Asia-Pacific area as well as some Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools—DDESS—in some of the states and territories. DoDEA serves over 100,000 students in over 200 schools in 15 districts located in 13 foreign countries, 7 states, Guam, and Puerto Rico (DoDEA Facts 2003, 2004). For the most part, children of military families living in the U.S. go to public schools in the communities in which they live. When the military services refer to schooling of the military child, they are generally discussing public schools in the United States; there are more than 600 autonomous local school districts serving military children (AUSA, 2001). Because military personnel are expected to periodically serve overseas tours, students often transfer into and out of the DoDEA schools as well as into and out of public schools all over the nation.

A study by the U.S. Army shows the average military family moving every 3 years and nine times over a 20-year career, not including deployments that separate parents from children. Table 1 outlines a typical schooling sequence a military child might face wherein, during a 13-year period, the military child is moved five times, transitioning through two local school districts, two overseas DoD schools, and two continental U.S. DoD schools. It is these moves—the transitions—that are most stressful for families and children (AUSA, 2001).

The recently established USA4 Military Families initiative is addressing the issue of school transitions as number 3 of 10 "Key Issues" that need to be addressed to significantly improve the quality of life for military families. "Military

Table 1. Example of a Military Child's School Transition Experience

Grade of Military Child	Duty Location of Parent	School System Attended
K – 2	Germany	DoDDS (Europe)
3 – 5	Fort Benning, Georgia	DDESS School
6 – 8	Fort Shafter, Hawaii	Hawaii Department of Education
9	Northern Virginia	Fairfax County School District
10	Fort Campbell, Kentucky	DDESS School
11 – 12	Korea	DoDDS (Pacific)

children deal with differences in academic requirements and testing, as well as pressures associated with assimilating into new communities, including extra-curricular activities and sports" (USA4 Military Families, n.d., p. 4). As laid out by the Department of Defense,

> The USA4 Military Families initiative seeks to engage and educate state policymakers, not-for-profit organizations, concerned business interests, and other state leaders about the needs of Military members and their families, particularly as those needs intersect with state public policy. Through state/military partnerships, the DoD State Liaison Office seeks to develop relationships with states, work with them to remove unnecessary barriers, and significantly improve the quality of life for military families. (USA4 Military Families, n.d., p. 3)

As part of this initiative, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) is leading an effort to identify best practices, particularly examining the DoDEA schools, acknowledged to be excellent and serving military families very well. As Leslye Arsht, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community & Family Policy, described the program at the Pacific Region Education Symposium in Honolulu, Hawaii, July 7, 2006, once best practices are identified, they are to be disseminated, and assistance in implementing them is to be provided free to military-impacted schools. A key to this whole effort is the state/military partnerships.

Literature Review

A number of studies, organizations, writers, and researchers have influenced the national level work on easing transitions for military families and students. Although not referenced in these works, the model of practice called Invitational Education® (IE) is a natural fit, particularly in Hawaii, with the effort to ease the transition of newcomers into their new school and to make them feel welcome and connected to school.

SETS—U.S. Army Secondary Education Transition Study

In 1997, the U.S. Army began an informal information gathering effort to find out more about the educational issues that impact Army-connected students. This effort grew into a formal 2-year qualitative research project, conducted for the Army by the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC). MCEC was asked to study the educational impact of transitions experienced by military students in grades 9–12 and make recommendations to improve transition by the following:

A. Learning about moves during high school in order to find meaningful ways to lessen the myriad of transition challenges.
B. Discovering processes, policies, and solutions that have the potential to make the mobile life better for the teen and military family.
C. Surfacing opportunities to improve and amplify the capacities of schools and installations to respond confidently to the complexities of transition.

(MCEC, 2001)

This research effort became the *U.S. Army Secondary Education Transition Study*, called SETS for short. Using structured interviews, SETS researchers collected data from 423 military students, 239 educators, and 217 military parents in nine Army installations and their major supporting school systems. In summarizing findings and making recommendations, the researchers used tests of "intensity," "severity," and "malleability"; thus they looked for problem areas that had the potential for solutions.

The study resulted in eight categorical findings and recommendations and three overarching findings and recommendations, which laid the groundwork and outlined policy changes that non-military schools could make to significantly improve transitions between schools for military dependent students. A major outcome of the study was the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) drawn up and adopted by the nine school districts in the study and subsequently proposed and adopted by many others around the country. The purpose of the MOA is defined in part as "designed to facilitate the mutual development of reciprocal practices, conduits for information between systems about requirements, and accelerate the exchange of emerging opportunities" (MCEC, 2001, p. 26). Some of the major issues addressed in the MOA are the timely transfer of records, systems to ease student transition during the first 2 weeks of enrollment, practices that foster access to extracurricular programs, procedures to lessen the adverse impact of moves of juniors and seniors, variations in school calendars and schedules, professional development systems to help teachers and staff better serve military dependent students, partnerships between the military installation and the supporting school, information concerning graduation requirements, and specialized services for transitioning students when applying to and finding funding for college (MCEC, 2001).

Third Culture Kids

In a presentation to the Pacific Region Education Symposium in Honolulu, Hawaii, July 7, 2006, Nancy Bresell, Director of DoDDS Pacific/DDESS Guam, described how DoDEA schools have used the work of Pollock and Van Reken (2001) on "third culture kids" (TCKs) to inform the development of their programs. TCKs are described as children who spend a significant part of their developmental years abroad. Pollock explains the concept of the third culture as follows:

> Living abroad for an extended period of time changes one sufficiently so that individuals are no longer as they would have been had they stayed in their home country (the first culture) but neither are they like the people in their host country (the second culture). The result is that they form a new community of people that we call the third culture and the children from that community are third culture kids. (Roman, 2004, ¶ 1)

Pollock and Van Reken (2001) describe the cross-cultural experience and a "TCK Profile," which includes personal characteristics, practical skills, experiences of rootlessness and restlessness, personal relationships, developmental issues, and unresolved grief. Their work includes the challenges and the benefits of "the experience of growing up among worlds." Most valuable to DoDEA in their work to ease transitions for their military dependent students are the suggestions these authors make to children, parents, and

organizations for making the best of the experience. Among these is use of the RAFT system to help children decide to leave right. Leaving right involves four issues: the reconciliation of conflicts (R), the affirmation of important relationships (A), farewells done in culturally appropriate ways (F), and thinking realistically and positively about the future destination (T). Bresell described the use of "building the RAFT" in DoDEA schools.

Pollock and Van Reken identify the key to adjusting to a new culture is being a willing learner and having a good mentor who can explain the culture in detail and introduce the newcomer to others. Also identified as most important to relocation preparation is the communication of children's relocation histories—their previous residences, curricula, achievements, stresses, and traumas—to people in the new locations so they can respond appropriately to the children. The RAFT model is credited with helping individuals understand their own behavior and responses as well as the behavior of those around them and some of the psychological issues they deal with in the process of transition. They understand that their reactions are normal (Roman, 2004).

Add Health, School Connectedness, and MCI

The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), a federally funded, multimillion-dollar, school-based study conducted during the 1994-95 school year, is the largest, most comprehensive survey of adolescents ever done in the United States. Data were collected from 71,515 students in 127 schools via written surveys as well as from school administrators with the goal of identifying risk and protective factors at the family, school, and individual levels as they relate to adolescent health and risky behaviors (Resnick et al, 1997; School Connectedness Means, 2003). Analysis of the data showed that students who feel connected to school are less likely to use substances, engage in violent behavior, experience emotional distress, or become pregnant. "School connectedness" was defined in the study as positive answers to questions asking whether a student felt close to people at school, felt like part of school, felt safe at school, and felt that teachers treated students fairly.

One of the study's co-investigators, Robert W. Blum, formerly at the University of Minnesota and now the William H. Gates Sr. Professor and Chair of the Department of Population and Family Health Sciences at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, is particularly interested in why some adolescents feel connected to school and others do not. He and his colleagues found that school size mattered but classroom size did not, neither did location of the school (urban, rural, suburban) or type of school (public, private, parochial), or the number of years of experience of the teacher. The strongest factor related to school connectedness was school climate. Blum says, "What matters is the environment that a student enters when he walks through the classroom door. Do students treat each other with respect? Do they get along well with the teacher? Do they pay attention in class and complete their assignments on time? These are the important questions" (School Connectedness Means, 2003, ¶ 8–9).

Blum now heads up a major new project at Johns Hopkins University, funded by the Department of Defense—the Military Child

Initiative (MCI). This new effort builds on 20 years of research including work on school connectedness as well as the vast array of effectiveness studies of "problem reduction" programs like violence prevention and anti-drug curricula. From this literature we know that families are key to the lives of young people. Next in importance are schools. As levels of connectedness to school go up, a whole set of undesirable behaviors goes down. Schools can be a stabilizing force in the lives of adolescents. When students feel connected to their school they are more likely to succeed. Blum's latest work shows three dynamic influences interact to build school connectedness: individuals, environment, and culture. Individuals: "Students who perceive their teachers and school administrators as creating a caring, well-structured learning environment in which expectations are high, clear and fair are more likely to be connected to school" (Blum, n.d., p. 3). Environment: "Schools have a responsibility to provide students with a safe environment in which to develop academically, emotionally and behaviorally, while at the same time developing relationships with others" (Blum, n.d., p. 6) Culture: "Schools that value learning and have the most demanding teachers have significantly lower levels of peer harassment" (Blum, n.d., p. 12). The Military Child Initiative has as its goal "to move research-based practical approaches into schools and school districts so that all children and youth can thrive, especially those who are most socially mobile and emotionally vulnerable" (Military Child Initiative, n.d., ¶ 3).

Included among the recommendations Blum makes to schools to strengthen their connections with military students are the following: (a) to set up structures to welcome new students by providing them with peers to talk to and eat lunch with and to show them around the school and (b) to know their students. Both of these are consistent with the work of Pollock and Van Reken (2001) on third culture kids: they identified as important to adjusting to a new culture (a) having a good mentor who can introduce the newcomer to others and (b) the communication of children's relocation histories to people in the new locations so they can respond appropriately to the children.

Invitational Education®

The researchers and writers described above have all had influence on the efforts to ease transitions for military dependent students. Consistent with the previously described literature, another area of research and practice that has a place in helping schools create highly protective environments that include caring programs for students and well-planned strategies for family and community involvement is the model of practice called Invitational Education® (IE). Particularly in Hawaii, where the culture of *aloha* would seem to predispose the school community to welcoming behavior, IE would seem to be a natural fit, extending the hospitality more broadly and intentionally into all aspects of school life, making new students truly feel like part of the school. As a comprehensive organizational structure that could consolidate efforts, IE is an easily understandable practice that when broadly applied would yield the results that research shows promote school connectedness and adjustments to a new culture.

Invitational Education provides an overarching framework for touching on all aspects of schooling: the processes, the structures, the relationships, and more. According to one description, invitational theory draws

from "John Dewey's 'democratic ethos,' Carl Rogers' 'client-centered psychotherapy,' Sidney Jourard's 'self-disclosure,' Albert Bandura's 'self-efficacy,' and Martin Seligman's 'learned optimism'" ("What is," n.d., ¶ 4). Indeed the "Five Ps"—for people, places, policies, programs, and processes—are the means to address the whole school experience, to apply steady and continuous pressure from all angles to transform the character of the school (Purkey, 1999). The goal is to make all factors so intentionally inviting that the character of the school is one that promotes in every person full development intellectually, socially, physically, psychologically, and spiritually. Invitational Theory has been described as "a way of thinking about positive and negative signal systems that exist in all human interactions" ("What is," n.d., ¶ 4). The theory is based on four basic assumptions or propositions: trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality. These four propositions provide the consistent "stance" for operating to create and maintain an optimally inviting environment (Purkey, n.d., ¶ 14).

In addition to the five focus areas of people, places, policies, programs, and processes, IE involves four levels of functioning. Those four levels are intentionally disinviting, unintentionally disinviting, unintentionally inviting, and intentionally inviting. The latter is most desired and emphasizes the importance in the theoretical framework of the basic assumption of intentionality. It is intentionality that leads to creating and maintaining total environments that consistently and dependably invite the realization of human potential (Purkey, n.d.).

The theory applied to education implies that every person, every program, every structure, everything about school adds to or subtracts from the process of schooling being a positive force in the realization of human potential ("What is," n.d.).

The availability of the Inviting School Survey-R (ISS-R) is another factor arguing for IE's utility in Hawaii schools. Designed with the idea "that everything counts in a student's education: from the overall physical facility to the way each individual child is treated in each individual classroom" and useful for assisting "school personnel in identifying weaknesses in the system that could be corrected," the ISS-R could be way to assess progress toward creating a protective school environment as described in Blum's work on the Military Child Initiative (Inviting School, n.d., ¶ 4).

Invitational Education in Hawaii

Invitational Education has been an area of interest and research for University of Hawaii (UH) scholars for many years. Through their influence, particularly through courses taught in the preservice education program at the UH College of Education, familiarity with IE has been for many years widespread among Hawaii Department of Education (HI DOE) teachers, since the primary teacher training institution in Hawaii is UH. In her bibliography chronicling research on Invitational theory from 1970 through 1991, Stanley (1992) listed seven entries by eight different UH professors—in 1982, 1984, 1987, 1988, and 1991—making up 5.5% of the total number of articles (128) listed in the bibliography not written solely by Purkey or Novak, primary theorists of IE. A quick Internet search revealed additional articles by UH scholars in 1996 and 1999. In the *October Faculty Development Newsletter* in 2001, UH Faculty Development Coordinator Jerry Cerny described IE in his

opening message, referring to the Purkey and Novak (1984) book *Inviting School Success: A Self-concept Approach to Teaching and Learning* and exhorting faculty to invite success for their students.

Up until recently the Web page for the UH Department of Educational Psychology listed IE as an area of expertise for one of its nine regular faculty members (who has since retired). Since 1996, there has been at least one UH professor listed on *The Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice* editorial board, and University of Hawaii scholars have been and still are active in the American Educational Research Association Special Interest Group (SIG) on Invitational Education.

There is evidence in the research literature not only of the use of IE by classroom teachers in Hawaii (Maaka & Lipka, 1996), but also of the congruence of IE practices with Hawaiian cultural values. In a study of Hawaiian preservice teachers that involved examining themes of cultural identity, experiences with schooling, and literacy development, one of the participants referred in her writings and interviews to "disinviting" teaching practices and discussed IE in relation to Hawaiian culture. For her, Invitational Education "encompassed many of the Hawaiian values that she held dear—*ʻohana* (family), *aloha* (love), *kokua* (helping others), *ʻike* (knowledge/recognition), *hoʻoponopono* (forgiveness), *kuleana* (responsibility), *laulima* (cooperation), and *lokahi* (harmony/unity)" (Maaka, Au, Lefcourt, & Bogac, 2001).

The Current Study

From the national context, we now further examine the situation in Hawaii where we find ourselves at the leading edge and, in many ways, a potential model for other communities, particularly our unique state and military partnership. The partnership predated the SETS report, which subsequently recommended the development of just such relationships between communities and the military. Some of the initiatives supported by this partnership are right in line with suggestions now being made by the Military Child Initiative at Johns Hopkins, consistent with the recommendations of Pollock and Van Reken, and congruent with IE.

Context

In Hawaii, there are over 15,000 military dependent students in our public schools. They comprise about 8% of the total student population, which numbers about 200,000. Military students significantly impact 26 of the approximately 250 public schools in Hawaii, where they make up from 20% to over 90% of the school population.

Unfortunately, for many years now the military community has had a negative perception of the Hawaii public schools. This became a real issue for the United States Pacific Command (USPACOM), headquartered in Hawaii, in the 1990s when many high caliber military personnel expressed reluctance to accept assignments in Hawaii because of concerns for their children's education.

USPACOM brought this issue to the attention of the community and the HI DOE, and, working together, they formed the Joint Venture Education Forum (JVEF) in 1999. JVEF was formed to help military dependents successfully adjust to life and learning in Hawaii public schools. It encourages active military participation in Hawaii public

schools through open dialogue on educational concerns that

- promotes an understanding of and support for the needs of military children and families, in particular, transition issues, and
- facilitates educational support for Hawaii's public school students.

(Department of Education [DOE], 2005, p. 14)

JVEF had support and encouragement from Hawaii's senior Senator, Daniel K. Inouye, who helped find funding for the organization, which has received $5M per year since its inception to use on the activities of the schools and the organization. JVEF is chaired by both USPACOM and the HI DOE, and on the Board of Directors sit representatives from the major Service components on the Islands as well as education, business, and community representatives. USPACOM funds a federal civilian position to provide an executive director function for JVEF, and in 2006 the HI DOE established a liaison position as well to work with JVEF (DOE, 2005).

JVEF Accomplishments

An early accomplishment was facilitating the signing by the HI DOE of the Memorandum of Agreement that grew out of the Army's *Secondary Education Transition Study* and seeing the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines all establish School Liaison Officer (SLO) positions. The SLOs all sit on the JVEF Board.

Other activities and accomplishments of JVEF include development and delivery of a Military Culture Course for teachers and school staff. Started in 2002, the course "has served two critical purposes: 1) to inform school staffs about military culture and the particular needs that military dependent students come to school with, and 2) to be that catalyst to institute school-based efforts to meet those needs" (Joint Venture Education Forum [JVEF], 2006, p. 9). The eight courses conducted through 2006 reached 200 teachers and counselors from over 25 schools. Another 600 school personnel and 100 university students were reached through mini-sessions conducted by the SLOs.

The establishment in 2003 of MIPC, the Military Impacted Principals Council, was another milestone. The Council meets monthly, and membership has steadily grown to include more and more of the principals from the state's 45 military-impacted schools. MIPC developed the guidelines for waiving the Hawaii history course and developed criteria for designation of a school as "military student and family friendly." To earn the designation, a school must do the following: provide services to transitioning students and families, update its Web site with pertinent information, actively participate in JVEF initiatives, engage parents in school activities, accommodate schedule and curricular needs of new students, and maintain a safe environment for all students (JVEF, 2006).

Project Aloha is a new campaign to promote customer service throughout the HI DOE. To assist this effort another project was added that involves the makeover of the front offices and transition centers of several schools to create a more professional and welcoming first impression for military families and other newcomers to the schools and to facilitate operation of the schools' transition processes (JVEF, 2006).

The Transition Centers have been particularly effective and noted as very helpful by parents and students on the annual surveys. Radford High School, with a student body that is about 60% military dependents, developed their first transition center several years ago, initiating a "Student-2-Student" program. The model has been further developed and disseminated by MCEC—the Military Child Education Coalition. Other schools in Hawaii have developed transition center programs as well, most of which emphasize using students for program delivery. This makes the program affordable and adds to the validity of the information being shared with the new students, since it comes from their peers and is delivered often more effectively. This model is also consistent with suggestions by Pollock and Van Reken (2001) regarding providing mentors to teach newcomers about their new culture.

The U.S. Pacific Command funded an annual customer satisfaction survey to identify issues of concern and to help gauge the effect of the many JVEF activities and initiatives on the perceptions of military parents and students in the schools. Those activities and initiatives over the last 5-plus years have included repair and maintenance of schools, purchase of textbooks, support to military-school partnership projects, establishment of technology labs in schools, new school playground equipment, recognition awards, citizenship grants, and transition initiatives—totaling over 26 million dollars (DOE, 2005). Of late the priority has shifted to student respect. Beginning in fiscal year 2004, JVEF has offered schools grants to promote programs dealing with respect, diversity, tolerance, and behaviors (JVEF, 2006).

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

In 2002, USPACOM initiated the Hawaii School Study to assess military families' experiences and perceptions of Hawaii public schools. The objectives of the annual survey were to assess satisfaction with the schools in general and in key areas among three groups: parents, students in grades 5–8, and students in grades 9–12. The survey was conducted by mailing questionnaires to all active duty military parents of children attending Hawaii public schools and students of military members in grades 5 through 12 (Beers, Carr, & Okinaka, 2005).

Four annual surveys were conducted through 2005. Because of the use of convenience samples, generalizing results had to be done very cautiously. A further limitation was the difficulty of reaching the target population with the surveys. By the time surveys were mailed in the spring of the year, the address information was over 6 months old. With an average tour length in Hawaii of just 3 years, a third of the population turns over each year. Add to that problem that many children change schools once their families settle into permanent housing, and the proportion of bad and incomplete addresses increases significantly. Note that there are approximately 15,000 military dependent students in the Hawaii public schools. Response numbers for the 2005 survey were 3,142 parent surveys; 512 student surveys from grades 5–8; and 412 surveys from grades 9–12. These numbers represent response rates of 40%, 22%, and 24%, respectively, of the total number of possible responses in a group (7,810; 2,293; 1,673, respectively), eliminating any cases for which addresses were bad or incomplete. Responses were also possible using the Web for the 2005 survey administration (Beers,

Carr, & Okinaka, 2005). The kinds of questions asked tap into many of the factors that the research identifies as being important to school connectedness and Invitational Education. Table 2 is a summary of results for the 2005 survey.

The fourth USPACOM School Study closed on July 15, 2005, and a report was completed that looked at the trend of results over the four years of administration. The fourth survey was found to reaffirm the conclusions after the first three surveys, that parents who responded were quite satisfied with the teaching in the schools and less satisfied with the resources, and that their overall perceptions continue to improve, although families are still reluctant to recommend their school to others. Since funding priorities of the Joint Venture Education Forum have been set to reflect survey results, the need became obvious for a more scientifically administered survey to assure the accuracy of the conclusions. The report noted that responses to the first four surveys were voluntary and that a fifth survey might need to be more statistically valid and reliable, using random sampling and survey methods to ensure generalizability of the results. Also recommended was the addition of qualitative methods like focus groups to get at the reasons behind the consistently lower ratings on global satisfaction items (like willingness to recommend their school to others) (Beers, Carr, & Okinaka, 2005).

2006–2007 Survey and Focus Group Study

USPACOM declined to fund another annual survey. Instead the Hawaii DOE contracted the University of Hawaii to conduct a survey using a random sample that could be used to generalize results to the overall military public school population.

The survey proposed for 2006–2007 was two-fold and included a written survey of military families and a newly added focus group study done by a group from Johns Hopkins University and the Military Child Initiative. We conducted a preliminary survey in June 2006, using this pilot study to revise the survey instrument and develop methodology to identify the target population, design the probability sampling to draw a stratified random sample stratified by school, and set up survey administration procedures to yield sufficient data collection to ensure an accuracy of at least ±5%. Appropriate follow-up procedures were developed, which included cooperation with USPACOM to utilize military email white pages to search for military sponsors and follow-up via email. Extensive use was made of the Web-based surveys. Results were sufficient to be a proof of concept for the selection and follow-up methodology and were used to flag certain issues to be followed up on in the focus group interviews. The final survey was mailed in February 2007, that being the very earliest we could get the data with military dependent student information from the HI DOE.

The focus group interviews were conducted in fall of 2006, and the preliminary results were used to revise the survey questions. It became apparent that the original survey did not touch on important aspects of schooling that were factors in judgments about school quality. We added questions that tapped more deeply into the social environment of the school, about bullying and being treated fairly, and tried to get at the respondent's openness to new experiences. We rewrote some questions as negatives to help prevent careless responding.

Table 2. Summary of Parents' and Students' Responses to Survey Items

	Percent Agreeing		
	Parents*	Grade 9-12	Grade 5-8
Questions	2005	2005	2005
Students are able to learn at school	87%	88%	90%
Teachers care about students	78%	70%	80%
Students feel safe at school	78%	68%	64%
Students feel welcome at school	77%	68%	73%
School provides information about student progress	71%	73%	82%
Students learn critical thinking	71%	74%	78%
Teachers are well qualified	70%	67%	85%
Students receive adequate help	69%	77%	83%
School is clean and well-maintained	69%	56%	55%
Students are learning grade-appropriate information	68%	69%	76%
School has created a good learning environment	67%	63%	63%
Assignments are meaningful and challenging	67%	66%	76%
Administrators care about students	64%	55%	66%
Discipline is fair and timely	62%	61%	60%
Adequate access to computers and technology	62%	73%	65%
School has adequate facilities	61%	73%	69%
Students treat each other with respect	59%	45%	53%
Textbooks are adequate, up-to-date, and relevant	55%	60%	68%
I would recommend this school to others	52%	58%	53%
School has made positive changes in the last year	52%	51%	44%

* Note: Results are sorted according to parents' overall agreement. (Beers, Carr, & Okinaka, 2005)

Results from this survey are expected to be extremely useful to the HI DOE and the military-impacted schools as well as to JVEF as future years' projects and expenditures are planned. The survey report will cite the literature on school connectedness as well as the principles of Invitational Education insofar as both will be useful to schools to make their environments more invitational and welcoming.

Discussion

Hawaii seems to have been at the forefront of the efforts to improve education quality-of-life issues that are now part of the focus of the new national USA4 Military Families initiative by the Office of the Secretary of Defense. We have had OSD and DoDEA officials make a number of visits to the island to confer with the military and the HI DOE as well as with legislators, university, business, and community members—visits

often facilitated by the JVEF executive director. Hawaii will be partnering with these national efforts as they develop, although just what form these partnerships take has yet to be determined. There has been some pressure on military impacted schools to adopt the DoDEA curricula school wide and even complex wide. (A complex consists of a high school and its feeder middle and elementary schools.) But Hawaii's comprehensive system of state standards and accompanying assessment program must be used for the federally mandated *No Child Left Behind* accountability requirements, and the DoDEA curricula scope and sequence have not been reconciled with these state standards.

The latest survey of military families to assess their experiences and satisfaction with Hawaii public schools is an effort to get more valid and generalizable results by using stratified random sampling methodology and increasing the response rates. The preliminary report from Johns Hopkins University and the Military Child Initiative on the focus groups has revealed some previously unrecognized factors that go into judgments about school quality. This will open up new possibilities for the improvement of our public schools and an increase in their invitational character. For example, R. W. Blum (personal communication, May 23, 2007) found that "for many military families, their experiences in Hawaii represent a drastic shift from the world they have previously known. For some this means being a minority for the first time in their lives and for others it means not being a minority for the first time in their lives. Some find the experience very positive, at least in hindsight."

From the focus group data—transcripts of discussions with military parents and with students—Blum also noted that when families were generally satisfied with their experience in Hawaii they seemed to also appreciate the culture; when they were not satisfied they seemed to resent the time and emphasis put on Hawaiiana in the curriculum. Blum found much praise for the transition programs in the Hawaii public schools, but he also heard complaints about counselors and teachers not knowing how to support students during a parent's deployment (R. W. Blum, personal communication, May 23, 2007).

Part of the survey report will focus on those programs and activities that have made a positive difference for transitioning military dependent students and their families. There were multiple opportunities for comments on the survey instrument, and those qualitative data are expected to also yield information about things parents and students believe can make the Hawaii public schools more invitational and make for a quality educational experience that facilitates students' follow-on transitions to other schools around the nation and the world.

When all the results are in—the quantitative results of the survey and the qualitative results from the focus groups and written comments on the surveys—we expect that some sensitivity training will be called for among all the groups involved in military dependent education in Hawaii public schools. Newcomers need to be alerted to the cultural differences they will encounter in Hawaii. Those who live and work in Hawaii need to be made aware of the special circumstances and stresses that confront military families and, beyond being understanding and tolerant, must also be empathetic and helpful. Here is where Invitational Education can be very instructive, and we could use a resurgence in its teaching and

use. We need to think of all the ways that we can help our young people reach their full potential, and this would include helping them learn the social skills they need to get along in this world as well as the academic skills they'll need to earn their way. Although research in IE seems to have waned recently at UH, its relevance to the need in HI DOE schools serving military dependents warrants its reintroduction to those school faculties and follow-up studies as to its effectiveness.

We know that living in and going to school in Hawaii's multiethnic, multicultural community can be an invaluable learning experience for students and their families, especially if they embrace the diversity and opportunity to learn and are offered and accept the invitation to join our island family and to experience the best of Hawaii. The results of this study will be used to help make that positive experience more available to military families in Hawaii public schools. The results will be used to open the eyes, minds, and hearts of all the stakeholders in our educational endeavor.

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