



Preface to the Second Edition and Acknowledgments

TIFFANI CHIN

When we wrote the first edition of *Tutoring Matters*, I had no idea how profoundly tutoring would end up shaping my career and my life. Throughout high school, college, and graduate school, tutoring was something that I did and enjoyed, but it was rarely a central part of my life. I got my first tutoring gig, as an SAT tutor, when I was a junior in high school. At the time, I was just amazed that I could receive a raise of more than two dollars an hour above what I had been making in retail, just because I had good SAT scores. In college, tutoring was community service: a way to see the city of Los Angeles and to help a group of amazing young children who needed academic support. In grad school, tutoring became, once again, a way to make money. And, through private tutoring, I entered and learned about a whole new world: the privileged and exclusive world of private-school admissions in Los Angeles. During that time, I continued to do community service, the most compelling of which was with young parolees, on early release from lockup, in South Los Angeles. These smart, articulate young men, with little to no education, were striking in their potential and in the fact that many would never step out of the lives that they had—even given their intelligence and the fact that we wanted to help them.

Overall, I enjoyed tutoring, I learned a ton from my tutoring experiences, and I felt that I had a knack for it (the kids seemed to do well, in any case). I almost always had some kind of tutoring going on, and I toyed with the idea of teaching, but I never followed through. By the

time I did the fieldwork for my dissertation, I knew that I was interested in kids—although I still thought I was more interested in the academic side than in actually teaching. But the four years I spent in a fourth-grade classroom under the amazing tutelage and mentorship of career teacher Sue Shultz showed me that teaching is truly one of the highest callings we can follow. And from Ms. Shultz and her students, I learned that many students need a “team” to succeed in school. That team includes the student, the teacher, the parents, and any “others”—from teaching assistants to tutors to older siblings—who can help that student progress.

As I moved from my dissertation to my post-doc, studying students in elementary and middle schools, I learned that the school side of the “team” was often quite good. Although teachers could not always reach and help every child, they tried—and most students seemed to receive relatively good educations during the school day. But many kids struggled tremendously when they left school: They couldn’t do their homework, their parents worked long hours and weren’t home, their parents or caregivers didn’t speak English and couldn’t help with homework, or their parents just didn’t know how (or did not feel confident enough) to help with homework. It seemed obvious to me that many of these students needed a tutor on their team to help them become successful—and to reach the academic potential that they already had.

And that is where the public school system helped me once again. When I talked with my friend and advisor, Meredith Phillips, a scholar who researches educational equity and cares fiercely about raising achievement, she didn’t downplay my concerns. She didn’t push me to just focus on publishing my dissertation. Together we created EdBoost—a nonprofit learning center dedicated to improving educational equity by providing educational services (especially tutoring) to low- and moderate-income families. After a few years of offering free classes over the summer, we opened the doors to our learning center in 2004.

And so, I write this new introduction while sitting in my office in EdBoost. I tutor every day and have dedicated my career to providing high-quality tutoring to students. I supervise about thirty college-student tutors a year, and we serve at least two hundred fifty students a year in our learning center (more if you count the SAT-preparation classes and college-counseling programs we run throughout the Los Angeles area). So this book and the notion that everyone can tutor (but that everyone who tutors should try to tutor the absolute best that they can!) have become very dear to me.

I hope that this second edition provides practical tips and insights that the first edition lacked. For these additions, I am deeply indebted to EdBoost's amazing students (I learn something new from them every day) and our incredible, dedicated tutoring staff—thank you all for the care and effort that you put into working with our students (thanks especially to Sunny Tamrakar, Emi Rourke, Erin Moore, Genevieve Richards, Nina Abonal, and Brittany Ramos, exceptional tutors who have really helped make EdBoost the place that it is)! The more I watch our staff tutor, the more I have hope that truly amazing young people in America can make a difference and help the next generation be even better. I also thank all of you, our readers, and I hope that this book inspires you to work with and to help as many students as you can.

Last, but certainly not least, thank you to my wonderful husband, Todd, for all his support, no matter how many hours I spend at EdBoost and how much work I bring home. And, to my sweet baby, Quinn, I sincerely hope that you'll one day know the joy that comes from teaching—and learning from—others.

JEROME RABOW

Twelve years have passed since the publication of the first edition of *Tutoring Matters*. As the finishing touches on this second edition are being completed, I wish I could report that the gap in education between those who attend schools that provide them with a sense of possibility and hope and those who are exposed to the savage inequalities of racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia has diminished greatly. It has not. A sprinkling of dedicated teachers and principals, a curriculum aimed at inclusiveness, and an inspiring superintendent continue to be exceptions rather than the everyday practices of schools and school systems. No national will has developed to ensure that all our children know and feel that schooling, learning, and committed teachers are their rights as citizens. The idea that excellence in education is the most essential foundation of a more equitable, more just America has no national commitment.

Tutoring Matters is a modest offering in this storm of unfairness. Although “life is unfair,” much of the unfairness has to do with the injustices created by the ways that schools teach. *Tutoring Matters* will help tutors appreciate and learn how an honest, supportive, compassionate, committed relationship can make a difference in the life of another.

Because learning can “lead” to imagination and hope, to pride and confidence, you, the tutor, can be rewarded in ways that perhaps you may never have experienced before. Discovering that your dedication, compassion, understanding, patience, and support of your tutee can instill hope, confidence, and excitement is awe-inspiring. Discovering that *you* can make a difference in the lives of others is empowering. With this understanding and awareness, we hope that you see that it is now your responsibility to ensure that more of these processes occur in schools, families, communities, and our country.

A key individual who facilitated this new edition is Jeimee Estrada, who after taking my class in public education organized a seminar with her sorority sisters from Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc. This class, which was known as the Promotora program, tutored older Latina women and was a satisfying and enriching class for myself and the participants. Jeimee became a facilitator for a number of other classes and saw ways of improving the first edition of *Tutoring Matters* by going over notes that we had collected and reviewing every word of the manuscript. Jeimee is pursuing a career in public policy devoted to education. I am personally grateful for her past presence in my classes and in my life.

Two other students, who have since graduated and were extremely helpful and diligent in the reediting of this second edition, are Shannon Mercogliano and Katya Rodriguez. Shannon is dedicated to combating the inequity between dominants and subordinates through action and information. Katya is embarking on a two-year commitment in the Peace Corps; after this endeavor, she will be pursuing a career in public policy, with a focus on international relations.

My class in the Honors College at UCLA, “Dominants and Subordinates in Public Education,” continues to be a source of inspiration and hope. These outstanding students—many of whom came to understand their privilege, while others overcame their pain to develop compassion and understanding—shared their time with tutees, fellow students, and their facilitators. The facilitators for this Honors Class have included Azin Ahmadi, Jeimee Estrada, Donna Rahimian, and Pauline Yeghnazar. They contributed enormously to the development of students and the success of the class. Each of them brings a unique vision to the students. The students in my most recent Honors Classes deserve recognition. In the fall of 2009, the students were Azin Ahmadi, Maeva Asare, Bryson Banks, Jun Dizon, Allyse Engelder, Michael Gallin, Jr., Michael Ghalchi, Oghomwen Igiesuorobo, Tamlyn Lee, Noah Lehman, Ginger

McCartney, Tessa McClellan, Shannon Mercogliano, Shawn Moshrefi, Daniel Moss, Amanda Murillo, Priscilla Pepper, Brittany Ryan, Daniela Sanchez, Colin Valencia, Sabena Vaswani, Laura Watson, Melanie Woods, Haijing Zhang, and Xiaoyan Zhang. In the spring of 2009, the members of this class included Sarah Barker, Bianca Bazil, Subir Bhatia, Shaye Blegen, Heather Boberg, Teresa Cho, Leonardo Cortes, Michael Dreim, Sade Elhawary, Kevin Fukuyama, Angelica Galang, Jaime Garza, Christine Gibson, Lauren Goldman, Sabrina Gutierrez, Ester Jeong, Colin King, Minji Kwon, Ruth Lawanson, Marissa Lee, Tiffany McCormack, Nicolas Molina, Socorro Morales, Emily Perez, Samuel Rosenblum, Harry Sa, Mitchel Seaman, Martha Silva, Ashley Sizemore-Smale, Mohammad Tehrani, Anniesha Thomas, Chase Turay, and Mary Yeh.

This second edition is dedicated to the children of the world who receive less in education than they deserve. It is also dedicated to Matthew and Zachary Rabow and Lucie and Liliana Berman, the four grandchildren whom Roslyn Rabow and I share. Although I have met many wonderful teachers who model the finest qualities of a deep educator, Jill Weston deserves special acknowledgment. Finally, there is my special teacher, Roslyn Rabow, who continues to provide me with endless lessons about human relationships and hope.

JEIMEE ESTRADA

I had the good fortune to become involved with this new edition of *Tutoring Matters* as a result of a course I took from Jerry Rabow and a research assistantship with him. The class was one of the most engaging experiences I have had in higher education. I read the first edition of this book in that class, and I was drawn to it, along with other research in education—specifically research on how underprivileged students move through our education system. Tutoring, as many who will read this manual already know or will come to see, is meaningful in so many ways and is particularly important for students who have fallen behind or who learn a little differently.

I have been especially drawn to the tutoring process and have pursued a deeper understanding of it because of my own experiences in education. I am a first-generation college—and now master's level—graduate. As President Barack Obama says in his book *The Audacity of Hope*, “I am a prisoner of my own biography” (2006: 10). Coming from an underprivileged background, where my family and I fought for educational

opportunities that weren't readily available to us, I have developed a keen understanding of the value of individuals in advancing a student's educational career. At an early age, I learned that tutoring (and mentoring) is one very powerful avenue through which those who have less can achieve more and those who have more can share the benefits of their privilege.

During my work on this book with Jerry and Tiffani, I participated in the founding of a tutoring program for non-English-speaking, adult Latina women in downtown Los Angeles. With my Lambda Theta Alpha sorority sisters at UCLA, we developed lessons, fund-raised, and traveled downtown with one goal—helping the women learn basic English communication skills for work, for daily activities such as banking and grocery shopping, and even for understanding their kids a little better. Jerry and I developed a class to supervise our tutoring sessions and document our tutees' progress. It was through these experiences—and through study of the works of Paulo Freire, Sylvia Ashton-Warner, John Dewey, James W. Loewen, and Herbert Kohl—that I learned so much about the process of tutoring. The class met weekly, and we discovered that we could impact the lives of human beings in special ways *that were more rewarding to us* than to them. I also spent time searching notes from the tutoring experiences of other UCLA students for examples that would demonstrate the principles outlined in this book and would provide real-world examples of the problems tutors face when they deal with differences in race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, and age. With the help of many students (Janet Ruiz, Destiny Almogue, Ashley Sizemore, Alan Secretov, Jami Hewitt, and others), I collected and learned from hundreds of tutoring experiences for this book.

My own experiences and understanding of the educational system led me to go on to complete a master's degree in public policy at USC and a fellowship with Education Pioneers. I have since moved to Sacramento to become involved in policy decision making in K–12 education with the California Legislative Analyst's Office. On a more personal note, my family, sorority sisters, and fiancé have all been wonderfully inspiring and supporting of my passion for equity in education. I cannot thank them enough for their love.

I hope that this book can make a difference in the lives of those who read it and those who receive the benefits of their tutoring. I dedicate this book to all the students who are at risk of falling through the many cracks in our education system—may your own perseverance and intervention from caring individuals result in your success.