


# Introduction

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## and
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That our world increasingly concerns the body should come as no surprise. In the United States, at least, we see television advertisements probably once considered in bad taste for products we are now willing to admit or think we need: Depends undergarments or Detrol pills for incontinence, Viagra for erectile dysfunction, SSRIs for depression/shyness/anxiety, nicotine patches for quitting smoking, Pravachol for cholesterol, and the “Little Rascal” for getting around without walking. More patients and more payers mean more visible treatments or devices advertised for hearing loss, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, diabetes, heart disease, and the effects of aging, illness, and/or catastrophe. And more money and worries mean more public-interest or paid announcements about “just saying no” to sex or drugs. Medicine and psychiatry are no longer privately discussed doctor to patient but are dependent upon what HMOs do or must cover—infertility treatments along with Viagra, and Ritalin for the young. There are more weight-loss clinics and products, tattoos and tummy tucks, hair and skincare products available than ever before. "Infomercials" flood the airways. And let us not forget the rubber gloves, gas masks, and Cipro being hawked in the wake of recent biological and chemical-warfare scares. For the first time, coffins too are for sale on TV, advertised at a discount.

On the other hand, teacher-student disclosures and discussions of the needs and effects of the body, except perhaps in the "health classes" mandated in the 1970s or in the most theoretical terms, move along more slowly. Although we remember thinking frequently about the body when we were students, we can't quite imagine having learned, as our own children have, that a fourth-grade teacher was facing a heart-valve replacement operation; a piano teacher required a hysterectomy and summer recovery; a violin teacher had painful bursitis in her shoulder; and a riding instructor had a rib broken by a kicking horse. Perhaps it's only that our children are more out there, bodily, in ways we couldn't afford to be or weren't encouraged to be. Teachers and students no longer leave school if pregnant or ill, and access to learning and work for all and to realms formerly mostly for the male student body—whether sports or auto mechanics and shop—is a right.

In an earlier time, we noticed our teachers and studied them, but we didn't know much that wasn't either spoken or visible. What we did know, however, were things like these:

Diane loved her third-grade teacher. Not only did she make Diane feel smart, but she also let her sit on her lap and in winter helped her to pull on her stubborn snow pants. Diane learned that she could be little and somewhat coddled and still be smart. And the teacher—funny, big, and loud—could be maternal and more. Diane also loved her sixth-grade teacher, who was both her homeroom teacher and her sixth-grade science teacher. She was pregnant and left before the end of the school year to have her baby. She taught Diane that someone who was visibly a woman and mother-to-be could be smart in the ways mostly only boys were then considered smart. She had a short haircut and a no-nonsense sense of style and speech, but she, too, Diane could tell, respected Diane's mind. That was also why she was so disappointed (as was Diane) when she discovered Diane had written test answers on her hand during a trip to the bathroom.

No teacher's body went unobserved by Diane, though hers was ignored or maligned by some of them. The best learning situations, however, were those in which teacher and student acknowledged and approved of one another's bodies and minds. Diane disliked or was made anxious by her seventh-grade history teacher because he called her "mouse," making fun of her small size relative to her classmates, and because he collected and then mistreated animals and students—sometimes by punishing students with a detention during which they'd have to watch him feed white mice to the class snakes. He also claimed at times that animals had been lost in transit, as when the promised African monkeys failed to arrive and he used that as the excuse for not returning the essays on which some students had worked hard (he claimed the monkeys had gotten sick over the essays). At other times he stamped "bull" or "circular file" on their papers with his collection of custom stamps. And Diane noted the crooked teeth of her tenth-grade English teacher and was bothered by them but probably only because he seemed unfriendly and distant and rocked back and forth in his chair as he spoke, never minding that the chair leg repeatedly came down on one of his feet or that his toes got pinched by the drawer slide at the back of his desk drawer. It's probably no coincidence that the book Diane most remembers from that class is William Golding's *Lord of the Flies,* a novel about boys who turn on and eventually decide to eat one other when stranded on a desert island.

Diane now finds herself wanting to argue that, far from today's injunctions that teachers not hug students and that little boys and girls refrain from kissing one another, learning in school and loving and thriving in school require that teachers and students notice—and respect—their own and others' bodies.

When Diane became a teacher herself, she was reminded on several occasions that students often think teachers are and must be disembodied, though they are usually extremely relieved when they find out differently, after which classes and learning go much better. Her eighth-grade students needed to try on her clogs and admire her earrings and once even see her turn a cartwheel to be fully convinced she could be their friend and mentor. This extraordinary comradeship was necessary, she thinks, because she was teaching at a boarding school, and the girls and boys were lonely for their families. Diane's teaching had to have something of the family way about it even though she was not yet a mother herself.

When Diane was in graduate school and working as a writing teacher year after year to pay her way, her best semester (in terms of student evaluations) was the one in which she was quite unhappy and most likely showed her pervasive sadness on her face and in her posture. There seems to have been a connection between Diane's apparent emotional—and bodily—vulnerability and her winning a coveted teaching award that year.

Her students (when she was a new assistant professor some years later) remarked on how surprised they were to see her shopping, as they were, at a campus bazaar in the student union, querying her incredulously, "Was that you we saw buying earrings in the union on Saturday?!"

On the other hand, Diane once hadn't wanted to live in the town where she'd taught college lest a student spot her engaging in one of her then-favorite pastimes, swimming nude in the local (and legally off-limits) reservoir. So of course she'd sensed that there were limits to this otherwise necessary bodily interaction, just as there were limits to the heady times when such swimming habits and the wild dancing she used to do were possible.

In his collection *Confessions of the Critics,* H. Aram Veeser notes that "students are always shocked when they come upon their teachers out of school:

incredible! The teachers actually have a life apart from the classroom!" (ix). He quotes Rachel Brownstein's contribution to the collection, a chapter that asks us "to remember 'the delight and mischief and disbelief you first felt when your third-grade teacher turned up in a two-piece bathing suit at the beach. Why that's Mrs. Fisher—out from behind the desk, in a body!'" (Diane published an essay in that collection devoted to the still-new practice of autobiographical or "personal" scholarship, an interest and practice that for her clearly grow out of her conviction about the necessarily embodied nature of knowledge and pedagogy.) Veeser makes the general claim, one to which we accede, that these days teachers (and academic writers in general) increasingly "have come to appreciate the attention they suddenly command as soon as they slip into a body" (ix).

Again, when Diane was pregnant but not-quite-showing while teaching at Skidmore College, her students asked her why she was pulling hard-boiled eggs out of her jumper pockets and choking down too-dry granola bars while they spoke. Eventually Diane's pregnancy, via her hunger, couldn't be denied. And it actually gave her some extra authority if not solicitous attention. (On the other hand, a year before, Diane had lost a baby before she began to "show," and that loss went unmarked and unmentioned, though her sadness had surely helped shape classroom dynamics then just as her pregnancy did a year later.)

At the institution where Diane has been teaching for the last ten years, her female colleagues also report increased tolerance and solicitation as their own pregnancies visibly developed. However, a colleague who adopted rather than bore a child and did so after classes ended fall term got no such extra interest or support either from her colleagues or from the institution. Although campus policies include adoptive as well as birth parents in their "parental leaves," if no one notices you and if you are trying not to achieve a certain kind of notice (in preference to others), such as when you are applying for tenure, you don't even get the time off, let alone the time of day from colleagues, students, and administrators.

For many years of teaching, Martha's overall, comforting premise was that she was a mind attached to an apparatus, the body, whose purpose was simply to transport her ideas and intelligence to the classroom. The body didn't really matter except in service of this mind, the thing she had fallen back on all through her life when her body did not, for various reasons and in various contexts, suit. To talk or even think about the body (as she did, of course) seemed unprofessional.

The shift from unmarked to marked body happened without warning, such as when a large and distressed student spoke threateningly to her in an empty community college classroom and she remembered how small she was. Martha remembers that after that encounter she made herself demonstrate her physical bravery (teacherly authority) by giving the student a ride home; it was, after all, a winter night in northern Vermont and was well below freezing. After she dropped the student off with a calm and cheery "good night, see you next week," Martha cried and swore all the way home.

Even though Martha's students did not have to be at the front of the room (that "front" that follows the teacher's body wherever she moves), they had fewer tools to change the marked status of their bodies. Not only were they more relevant to each other as bodies than Martha was, but they were also more vulnerable to notice as particular kinds of bodies, especially in those situations in which they read and talked about gender, race, sexualities, and ability, in which certain bodies seemed to light up for other students as representative and be asked, to Martha's deep discomfort and perplexity, "What does a man think about this? What does a Chicana think about this? What does a person with a disability think about this?" The focus of the text on certain bodies seemed unbearable to Martha at times, and she longed for the unmarked realm of literature, generated by minds unattached to bodies. It has even become a pleasure for Martha to age out of the realm of relevance, where she can now comment on sexuality in a text without it seeming to adhere to her at all; to many of these students, whose parents are her age or younger, sexuality is simply not a country Martha or the students' parents inhabit.

When Martha finally got to teach about the body and the mesh of words, images, and practices that make and remake its meanings, the question of marking became much more complicated. In bringing the body to the foreground of class discussion, making it the text, the focus fell on everyone, although not on all equally. The classroom bodies were all under scrutiny, even when the class talked about bodies, disabilities, or differences as concepts. Many discussions were unintentionally painful in their association with the bodies the discussants lived in outside of the classroom, bodies that were stared at, rejected, obstructed from access to bathrooms and classrooms, diagnosed and classified, loved for the wrong reasons, photographed, written about, beaten, as well as treated kindly, loved, soothed, and delighted. Such conversations invited, not always with student or teacher consent, those bodies that considered and had abortions, gave birth, despaired, binged, purged, felt alien and were marked alien by others, as well as those bodies that loved, married, enjoyed, read, and learned.

In *Wit,* a play by Margaret Edson, the protagonist, a professor of seventeenth-century English literature with stage-four ovarian cancer, notes the irony in having for so long taught others about books but now having *her body* read "like a book" by medical personnel. Now she is the one and the thing being taught—both as an audience and as an object/subject matter. We accept the idea that the teacher's body should be read, though not cordoned off, as the protagonist of *Wit* seems to be. But more commonly, teachers can become ill and still be teachers. For this, we need engaged and critical analysis of how experience and classroom relate to one another; we do not need a dismissal or elevation of the teacher's body as (a) heroically and tragically ill (if ill or disabled), (b) miraculous and inspiring in its overcoming disability or illness, (c) all well, (d) a mistake or irrelevancy, or (e) something we should not talk about because (g) it is not subject matter related to our work. The essayists represented here are unflinching in their complex portrayals of embodied experience in the classroom.

We maintain that regardless of whether we or our students, singly or multiply, have physical or other health challenges and changes in evidence; whether our research and course offerings make explicit the physical contours of our subjects; or whether they include field and site work where the body is perhaps more clearly in play, we are inevitably, ineluctably inspired, limited, plagued, and aided by—given the growing state of discourse about the body, disability, and "selfhood"—our increasingly self-conscious bodies (and by the bodies around us). We need more books this like one that powerfully insist upon here-and-now stories of teaching in acadème.

The bodily reality of the college teacher may include cancer—and/or cartwheels and body piercing, ED, pregnancy, miscarriage, aging, youth, beauty, arthritis, depression, AIDS, heart disease, physical intimidation, diabetes, infertility, sleep deprivation, mobility impairment, paralysis, deafness, blindness, posttraumatic stress, rape, anorexia—many situations seen and unseen and many situations beyond those described in this volume.

Recent collections in a wide range of fields have renewed attention to the body—even, for example, *Our Monica, Ourselves* (2001), which, according to reviewer Micaela di Leonardo, reminds readers—like the Monica Lewinsky-Clinton episodes themselves and however "embarrassingly"—that the president of the United States has a body. The events, the book, and the theories and contemporary academic preoccupations on which the book is based emphasize "the classed, raced and gendered nature of embodiment in contemporary America" (9). A flier for the National Women's Studies Association 2002 Conference solicited papers for a plenary topic on the subject of "body politics" and the notion that "for more than a century, feminists have been responding to the platitude 'anatomy is destiny' and the drive both to curtail the forces of anatomy and social construction/socialization and to attend to the real needs and desires of women rooted in real bodies" (2). One of our contributors, Kimberly Wallace-Sanders, reports receiving a call for papers for a Canadian conference on "Teaching Motherhood, Being a Mother-Teacher and Doing Maternal Pedagogy." Clearly, as several contributors note, feminist scholars are at the forefront of unabashed discourse about the body. The chapters we present here thus enter an important moment of review and reenactment of the body's various meanings and employment in the college classroom.

As we well know, student bodies often command most of the attention in college classrooms. Young or old, pierced or tattooed, sleeping or rapt, these bodies dominate the room and seem to justify its existence. The body of the often-parodied professor, in contrast, is (to the students and increasingly to administrators) both present and irrelevant, disembodied by discreet or dowdy dress and, most hurried mornings, by a face unredeemed by cosmetics or careful coif. Even the battered briefcase expresses disregard for anything but the life of the mind and the practicalities of scholarship. One stereotype has the professor displaying the intellect without shame but keeping the body out of speech, sight, and investigation.

In order not to stuff all college faculty into one battered briefcase and to counter the demotion of college and university professors and teaching assistants, *The Teacher's Body* presents new essays exploring the palpable moments of discomfort, disempowerment, and/or enlightenment that emerge when we discard the fiction that the teacher (like the U.S. president) has no body. Many of these essays in fact portray the moments of embodied pedagogy as unexpected teaching opportunities. Visible and/or invisible, the body can transform both the teacher's experience and classroom dynamics. When students think the teacher's body is clearly marked by ethnicity, race, disability, size, gender, sexuality, illness, age, pregnancy, class, linguistic and geographic origins, or some combination of these, both the mode and the content of education can change. Other, less visible, aspects of a teacher's body, such as depression or a history of sexual assault, can have an equally powerful impact on how we teach and learn.

In personal and accessible prose informed by contemporary performance, disability, queer, feminist, psychoanalytical, and autobiographical theory, *The Teacher's Body* presents teaching bodies in a range of academic settings, examining their apparent effect on educational dynamics of power, authority, desire, friendship, open-mindedness, and resistance. The contributors, ranging in professional status from graduate students to full professors, teach at research institutions, small liberal arts colleges, and professional schools in the fields of composition and literature, sociology, oceanography, ESL, medicine, education, performance studies, American studies, African American studies, and women's studies.

Although this volume is unique in the range of disciplines its contributors represent and its focus on the implications of many kinds of teachers' bodies in the classroom, it continues a conversation that currently includes other thoughtful and successful volumes such as *Teaching What You're Not; This Fine Place So Far from Home: Voices of Academics from the Working Class; Calling: Essays on Teaching in the Mother Tongue; Never a Dull Moment: Teaching and the Art of Performance; A Life in School; Pedagogy: The Question of Impersonation;* and *Passing and Pedagogy: The Dynamics of Responsibility,* not to mention *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity; Enhancing Diversity: Educators with Disabilities; Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities; Staring Back: The Disability Experience from the Inside Out; Inside the Academy and Out:*

*Lesbian/Gay/Queer Studies and Social Action;* and *Coming Out of the Classroom Closet: Gay and Lesbian Students, Teachers, and Curricula,* among others.

A note about organization: The chapters that follow reveal so many connections even in their variety that there is no satisfactory arrangement of them into familiar limited sections. They enlighten and delight however they are encountered.

The volume opens with a chapter by Betty Smith Franklin, Professor of Curriculum, Foundations, and Research, in which she describes her changing awareness and practice of bodily engagement in the classroom experience. A prevalent theme and situation is that of eating disorders, plaguing students and faculty alike. Franklin ultimately acts inside and outside the classroom to alter the climate of female self-degradation and denial. All teachers and students, she argues, and the production of art, in fact, benefit from attention to embodied teaching reality in the classroom.

Explicitly framed by experiences of medicalization, the next three chapters are dramatic. A recollected scene of medical instruction opens Scott Smith's "On the Desk: Dwarfism, Teaching, and the Body," as "a man points at [his] hips, knees, ankles with a silver pen." Smith, now a university teacher with a critical consciousness of how medical and other cultures construct our bodies and our disabilities, argues that the body may be "the most telling text of the course, the one our students will . . . respond to in deciding what kind of teacher we will be for them."

Cortney Davis's "Body Teaching," which also begins with the clinical, provides an alternate perspective. As a medical educator, Davis knows possibly the most important part of health professionals' education occurs in examining rooms, literally hands-on, as patients' bodies, needs, voices, and various modes of being in the world merge with, deepen, and complicate the conceptual bodies of texts and lectures. The marked body is the patient's body, but what about the bodies of the teacher and learner who depend on her? As Davis elucidates, "I am keenly aware that I am a woman teaching a man [about women's bodies], and, in a role reversal even more volatile, a nurse teaching a doctor whose authority will be, ultimately, more respected than mine. Most of all, I am a female guide who must step out of her body, casting off any suggestions of sensuality or privilege, when it is precisely my body that allows me to excel at teaching this intimate exam."

Carolyn DiPalma's "Teaching Women's Studies/E-Mailing Cancer" examines the body moving in one time frame between academic and medical culture, theory and practice. "I . . . knew much about gendered body image, the signification of the breast and its (problematic) relationship to the social construction of 'femaleness' and 'femininity,'" she writes. What was more challenging was "weaving this knowledge usefully" into the experience of being diagnosed and treated for breast cancer and then bringing that weave of theory and practice into a women's studies classroom. Apprehensive both about encountering the medical model and being constructed in troubling new ways by colleagues and students, DiPalma instead found her healthcare encounters "appropriate, appealing, and personalized" and her students, in particular, ready to engage and support her experience. They clearly expressed in various ways that "[they] were going through an ill-defined and important process together—one at which [they] were all willing to work."

Teaching contemporary critical theory, which many of us do with a sense of its liberatory possibilities, often produces a scene of unnoticed and unattended distancing from the body, even when the theory itself engages embodiment. Diane Price Herndl's "Johnny Mnemonic" asks the difficult question of what it would mean to teach the postmodern subject with less of that safe distance if, for example, rather than celebrating the rhizomatic subject while passing as a Cartesian one, we actually acknowledged that our lives are fractured or that we feel, for example, like "bimbo professors" in the face of contemporary life. Further complicating a critique that is both assiduous and playful, Price Herndl's epilogue takes us beyond the bimbo professor to the ways her pedagogy changed when the body she brought to class was diagnosed with breast cancer, underwent chemotherapy and mastectomy, and eventually had the cancer go into remission.

If the teacher's body fades from awareness in the course of many classes, it always shows up on the first day of school, an opportunity sociology professor Rod Michalko uses to launch his students' first engagement with the basics of his discipline; from day one they learn Sociology 101 and "blindness," as he relates in "'I've Got a Blind Prof': The Place of Blindness in the Academy." But what is the Butlerian "scenography"of the entry of blindness into the university classroom, an event to which many students react with surprise? Michalko's investigation is both local, focused on the particular social organization of the university classroom, and applicable to many other scenes in which disability enters a social frame but is already framed by and even integrated into its most basic assumptions about bodies and knowledge.

As academic culture frames and places disabled bodies, attitudinal and physical environments can be mutually reinforcing, especially when the discipline and its research modes are both inscribed as "physical." Richard Radtke in "My Body, Myself: A Quadriplegic's Perception of and Approach to Teaching" narrates how academic culture narrowly defines both the "appropriate" physical and professional space of a quadriplegic oceanography professor and—in practical detail—his daily work within this space, work that increasingly stretches its boundaries.

The teacher's body often achieves presence by virtue of its difference from the context. In "The Day the Foreign Devil Came to Class," Pam Whitfield writes about the four years she spent teaching in Zhangzhou province in Southern China and of the realization that "my body would have to assimilate too," a public and private process in which Whitfield's negotiations of her distance from Chinese norms—not just of appearance and language but also of those "stylized, repetitive social acts" that constituted femininity in her new home—both obscured and clarified her ambitious goals as a teacher.

By probing the effectiveness or noneffectiveness of debating race and racial issues in the classroom, Simone A. James Alexander's "Walking on Thin Ice: The Il/legitimacy of Race and Racial Issues in the Classroom" examines how race, gender, and class determine classroom dynamics and course content. Alexander, a teacher of African American studies, addresses the responsibilities that both students and the institution expect the teacher to shoulder and how these expectations change when the teacher is of color. Although the head of her class, the teacher, ironically, not only suffers bodily containment in the enclosed classroom but tailors her discourse to suit the needs of her students and the institution. Moreover, the students, governed by race- and gender-restricted discourses, similarly suffer great discomfort. To negotiate this uncomfortable situation, Alexander challenges her students by teaching texts that celebrate differences and otherness.

Dance is both figure and practice for Petra Kuppers and Brenda Daly, in two very different chapters about dance as the enactment of learning. In "Moving Bodies," Kuppers demonstrates how contact improvisations and specifically the tactical use of the teacher's body (in a wheelchair) can allow students to engage difference physically and conceptually when the teacher sets up the dance classroom as a place where students can experience differences between nondisabled and disabled people, among nondisabled people, and within the self.

In Daly's "Dancing Revolution," an impromptu jig performed to rouse a somnolent student involves the whole class in the unclouded pleasure of overturning the academic dictum to "leave the body behind." "Dancing Revolution" sustains its exploration of dance as literary trope, pedagogic metaphor, and embodied experience for several more turns by reflecting on the different rhythms and crises of the dancing body through the combined life cycles of the teacher herself and the changing academic culture in which she teaches.

The nexus of professional development, bodily transformation, and theory forms the core of Ray Pence's "Enforcing Diversity and Living with Disability: Learning from My First Teaching Year," which explores his experiences of "change and convergence" initiated by the concurrence of his first year of graduate school, teaching, and living with chronic illness. Pence's experiences in the classrooms where he taught, seminar rooms where he learned about new epistemologies, and clinical spaces where he was defined as a psoriatic arthritis patient provide the raw material for these reflections. He locates his narrative within disability studies and American studies, disciplines that continue to shape his perceptions of identities: his own and those of people with whom he interacts as a teacher and scholar.

The idea that a teacher's body and sexuality must be both remembered and forgotten to produce effective teaching is part of Jonathan Alexander's "A 'Sisterly Camaraderie' and Other Queer Friendships: A Gay Teacher Interacting with Straight Students." Writing around and through his students' correspondence with him about who he was to them before and after he disclosed his sexuality, Alexander affirms "that there are multiple pedagogical advantages to 'coming out' in the classroom. . . . [I]n marking our sexual orientation, we encourage straight students (and faculty) to mark their sexual orientations and become aware of the ways in which sexuality is labeled, codified, and politicized in our society. At the simplest level, we postulate that, if the unexamined life is not worth living, then the unexamined heterosexual life, with latent homophobic attitudes left intact, could be lethal—as it has been, for instance, for Matthew Shepard and many other gays and lesbians." What complicates the value of disclosure, Alexander asserts, is the reality that "[his] embodiment and authority as a teacher more often than not depend on [his] students' actively suppressing 'knowledge' of [his] sexuality."

Amy Spangler Gerald writes about similar dilemmas in "Teaching Pregnant: A Case for Holistic Pedagogy," one of several chapters taking up perhaps the most common changed-body experience that occurs in the college classroom setting and thus deserves serious attention. Gerald here reflects on a composition class in which she assiduously kept her visible pregnancy out of the discussion, thinking that keeping her body out of the conversation would be an important professionalizing gesture. In fact, although it may have conferred more professional authority, keeping silent about pregnancy seems to have taken away another kind of teaching credit in the realm of the intimacy and nurturing that students expect disproportionately of women teachers.

Kimberly Wallace-Sanders also writes, in "A Vessel of Possibilities: Teaching through the Expectant Body," of the complications and undermining of authority that may arise when a teacher, because visibly pregnant, is inevitably seen by her students as both sexual and maternal, doubled (because revealed as "more than a whole body") and "fragmented" ("the emphasized abdomen obscures the rest of the body"). But even though pregnancy may thus compound what "faculty of color, and female faculty of color in particular," like herself, already experience—an acute awareness of their bodies in the classroom—it is also, for this teacher of women's studies and African American material culture, a "vessel of pedagogical possibilities."

In her own chapter on teaching pregnant, "At Home at Work: Confining and Defining Pregnancy in the Academy," literary scholar Allison Giffen addresses the institutional "confinement" of the pregnant professor. She proposes that although she may have found something liberatory (and salutary educationally) occurring in the classroom, we need to ask to what extent "baby talk" might "further codif[y] the legitimizing centrality of heterosexuality within the classroom and the university, and consequently exclud[e] queer identities, or even those men and women for whom having children was either not an option or not a desirable option."

The conversation about the pedagogical and political value of coming out, "making visible an identity that has been largely invisible, discredited, or actively ignored in the academy," has engaged the academy for several years now. As Brenda Jo Brueggemann and Debra A. Moddelmog discuss in "Coming Out Pedagogy: Risking Identity in Language and Literature Classrooms," when teachers claim "historically abject" identities (e.g., disabled person, queer), "knowledge, discourse, affirmation, recognition, and a political context" are produced in the interlinked realms of scholarship and the classroom. Brueggemann and Moddelmog's chapter powerfully interweaves two narratives of coming out (or, in the frame of Pamela Caughie, changing what they "pass" as) in the classroom, deepening and complicating what it means to pass as able bodied/heterosexual and then come out as disabled/homosexual. As the two authors, who teach together, illustrate with examples from their course, changing or "troubling" our performed identities in the presence of our students has powerful effects on teaching, learning, and notions of the body and identity.

The power of disclosing truths about the body is partly contingent on the vulnerability such disclosures produce in the classroom community. As Michelle Cox and Katherine E. Tirabassi observe, the small size of composition classes and their emphasis on first-person writing often generate student disclosures with their mixed harvest of pain and power, and composition teachers often wonder how to respond. Their "Dangerous Responses," however, looks at a different dynamic, narrating and analyzing how two classes' uncritical responses to an essay on date rape produced successive levels of vulnerability and personal and professional critique within their teachers. Feeling vulnerable can be particularly uncomfortable for us as teachers, while at the same time it creates the potential for an intensely ethical classroom encounter, one in which personal experience is tendered with the intent of giving a voice to silenced students. Cox and Tirabassi's collaborative narrative and analysis unravels exactly how complicated decisions about disclosure can be and offers an alternate scenario to teacher-class disclosure.

Finally, educational theorist Madeleine R. Grumet provides an afterword, "*My* Teacher's Body," on the dual nature of every body, the body as object and subject. Grumet herself moves between a discussion of "the teacher's body" and "*my* teacher's body [her own body or the body of the person who teaches her]," as she sums up some of the ways a teacher's subjectivity is first erased and then restored, both in this volume and in pedagogical history. Grumet celebrates "a curriculum at every level of education that acknowledges the existential realities of its teachers and students" and the contributors here, who "make themselves present so that their students may be present as well," integrated and educated.

Martha's most memorable experience of teaching and the body came during an NEH Summer Seminar on Disability Studies co-led by Rosemarie Garland-Thomson and Paul Longmore at San Francisco State University. The participants' differences included gender, age, ethnicity, academic discipline, and a wide range of disabilities. As the leaders may have predicted, the key text for many weeks became none of the cutting-edge essays and books assigned but rather the dynamics with which the group—and all their differences—came together in a seminar space.

As they worked with space, place, time, body, and communication, words such as "access" and "reasonable accommodation" acquired mass, dimension, texture, and tenor in ways that they can only if people with disabilities are present, seen and/or heard, and recognized in the interaction. This process of working out how to be together in conversation, in their different bodies, in that room, transformed every discussion the group had that summer.

It wasn't always easy or comfortable. A free-flowing sentence had to be interrupted: "Can you please use the microphone?" "You need to use the mike." "Do I have to use the mike?" "You have to use the mike." "Can you please identify yourself before you speak?" "Can you please move this chair?" A recurrent text was who was heard and who was not; who could come to the table and who did not have access. The group talked about what it felt like to have to keep asking for what you needed, even if you asked yesterday; what it felt like to forget what someone needed; and what it felt like, finally, not to need to ask and not to forget—to be able to converse because we had worked out, at least temporarily, these crucial (and reasonable) basics.

The group also talked about the academic conversations that took place and would take place again outside the seminar. What did it mean to disclose disability during a job search? If tenure committees had certain equations in mind for a body in motion toward tenure, what would it mean when a surgery needed to happen within that time? Would disability and pregnancy be viewed as parallel delays to the tenure clock, and did you have to pick one? How could disabled students have better access to our disability studies classes?

These conversations had more of an impact on the process of communication and collegiality—on scenes of teaching—than any of the content texts, convincing the group that discussions of the concept and history of difference, as important as they are, have significant limits. Visible, audible, tactile spaces of clear diversity, on the other hand, have remarkable power that doesn't often get realized. We all need to learn more about the real dimensions of access and about the many modes in which we invite or exclude conversation if we want to make our classrooms places where difference is really welcome.

Every teacher, even the distance-learning teacher, has a body (virtual or imagined though it may be) and needs to negotiate its place in the classroom, possibly transforming what cannot be made invisible into a sign of authority or, if she is particularly courageous, an acknowledged element of the learning process, as many of the writers in this collection have done. The body is already in the classroom, but how to acknowledge this and work with it is the question many of these writers explore. The focus is explicitly on the teacher's body and on a wide range of experiences of embodiment and pedagogy: what it's like to suddenly be a marked body, how that experience changes over time, how we engage those changes in powerful and productive and curious ways, how we change the meanings of our bodies and our students' bodies in the real time of the classroom and in the spaces of writing that attach to it.

One of the things this collection explores implicitly is this profession's interesting geography, the spaces in which our bodies exist and profess. As Simone James Alexander points out, the real time of the classroom is only one such space; for her, as for several of the other writers in this collection, the space of the essay is a place in which what happened there is unpacked and worked out, eventually to return to a new teaching space. Our students, similarly, work through the classroom time in their assignments, e-mails, office-hour visits, course evaluations, and nowadays in Internet discussion lists as well. Our bodies are diffused across many such sites of expression and interaction. But what many of these chapters remind us of is the power of presence and particularly the power of diversity in that presence: the difference that having a class in which the teacher and most of the students have visible or otherwise articulated and explored differences can make to our scenes of learning.

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