

2001

## Being There: Revising the Discourse of Emotion and Teaching

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### Recommended Citation

Jacobs, Dale (2001) "Being There: Revising the Discourse of Emotion and Teaching," *The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning*. Vol. 7 , Article 7.

<https://doi.org/10.7290/jaepl75u1j>

Available at: <https://trace.tennessee.edu/jaepl/vol7/iss1/7>

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## Being There: Revising the Discourse of Emotion and Teaching

### Cover Page Footnote

Dale Jacobs directs the Composition program at the University of Windsor and is the editor of *The Myles Horton Reader* (U of Tennessee P, forthcoming).

# Being There: Revising the Discourse of Emotion and Teaching

Dale Jacobs

What is the relationship between emotion and pedagogy? What is the place of affect in the composition classroom? How can we think about emotion in relation to our teaching and learning? My own experiences as a student and teacher have shown me the importance of acknowledging what both students and I are experiencing, whether it be joy, sorrow, anger, or indignation. We are not, after all, automatons; what happens in class is always affected by the complex relationships we share, the ways in which the class fits (or does not fit) into our lives, and the emotions/memories/experiences each of us brings with us. Further, it seems to me that if education is to be integrated into the lives of students, it's important to think about learning as active and creative, embracing the whole of the student, intellectually, emotionally, and physically. It's exactly this idea of education that Myles Horton and Paulo Freire discussed in their conversation that became *We Make the Road by Walking*. Horton describes "a holistic approach to education" in which "the way people live [is] more important than any class or subject" (168). Such an educational experience is participatory, according to Freire, one in which "in studying [we] also get the pleasure of playing" (172).

It takes a teacher who is fully engaged in the classroom to create an atmosphere that allows for this kind of holistic emphasis. Engaged teachers, as bell hooks writes, must "practice being vulnerable in the classroom, being wholly present in mind, body, and spirit" (21). In other words, to allow students' emotions to enter into the classroom, we as teachers have to also allow our own emotions to become part of the mix. Such teachers can nurture what I see as the important connection between emotion and intellect in the social network of the classroom. The problem, however, is that too many of these teachers "burn out," leaving the profession after only a few years. This essay seeks to explore the fine line between engagement and "burnout," between continual presence and eventual absence.

The issue of teacher burnout came home to me during the spring of 1998 as I was teaching a graduate course in Research Methods in Composition and Rhetoric. As I read through the students' reading journals towards the end of the semester, I came across the following entry written by Judy:

[Nancy] Welch talks about the "self-sacrificing image of the female teacher." Boy, could I relate to that! That is why I had to stop teaching this year. I have learned to recognize that I am a person who

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goes overboard with everything I do, and teaching is no exception. I spent hours and hours grading papers so that I had customized comments on each paper that I thought would add to the instructional experience of each individual student. I went to class early every day to meet with students, stayed late every day, and met with students in my office hours. Last year was the worst because I was teaching 10 hours per week, plus working as the tutor coordinator and the retention specialist. I was up until midnight every night writing comments on their papers because I couldn't settle for giving my students anything less than what I thought they deserved—my undivided attention. Forget having a personal life. I realized something had to give, so I met with the college president, who had hired me primarily to create the retention program at my school, and told him if that's what he wanted me to do, he had to give me release time from teaching. That solved the problem, but not really. If I ever teach again, I know I will be the same self-sacrificing teacher [. . .]. How can you teach writing and not be self-sacrificing? How do you achieve the balance between being a good teacher and still having time for yourself?

At the time, I thought I knew what to say to Judy, and I wrote a marginal comment acknowledging that these were tough questions, but that there were concrete steps that one could take to address these concerns. It was a sentence that I'm sure I thought was an incisive comment about juggling the workload of teaching composition. In my haste, I failed to realize that this standard "advice to a novice teacher" completely missed the point of Judy's journal by focusing on practical methods instead of on her as a person. Moreover, my comment was made with little apparent self doubt, with a degree of certainty that belied what I actually felt about this issue in my own teaching life. In retrospect, it is the kind of comment that I would studiously avoid making to a student about his or her writing because it implies that there is a right and a wrong way to approach it. So why would I make such a comment to Judy about her teaching, implying that I held knowledge that she had yet to attain? This is exactly the kind of transmission of knowledge that I argue against in my teaching life. What purpose did such a comment have in the context of this situation? What is the effect of such comments when they are made by those of us who teach and mentor teachers?

In retrospect, I think what is also happening in this note and in my response is that Judy is expressing what Alison M. Jaggar calls "outlaw emotions," emotional responses which have been constructed by the dominant culture or, in this case, the culture of the institution as unacceptable. Jaggar writes, "People who experience conventionally unacceptable, or what I call 'outlaw,' emotions often are subordinated individuals who pay a disproportionately high price for maintaining the status quo [. . .]. Outlaw emotions are distinguished by their incompatibility with the dominant perceptions and values" (180). That is, it is deemed unacceptable for teachers, especially female teachers, within higher education to express the kinds of emotions that underpin Judy's journal: anxiety, frustration, fear of losing control/agency, fatigue. The institutional expectation/desire, however, is that Judy and others like her will do the intellectual and emotional work

expected of them as teachers of required first-year courses, but that they will not voice any emotions associated with dissatisfaction in regard to their positions. She is, in effect, expected to be seen, but not heard, occupying a role whose boundaries are circumscribed by the institutional discourses about what it means to be a female teacher of first-year writing.

Charles Anderson's teasing out of the term "suture" helps me to think more about the construction of teachers' subjectivities. In "Suture, Stigma, and the Pages that Heal," Anderson writes that suture is "a term denoting the process by which we, as viewers of a given scene or participants in a particular discourse, move toward and are fastened into the subject position" (60). The discourse of the academy thus effectively fastens teachers like Judy into subject positions that not only strip them of agency, but also discourage them from expressing the emotions that surround such loss of agency. Anderson continues, "Suture inserts us into discourses that appear to give our lives coherence, wholeness, and meaning, but in that process, they also wound and break us, separate and alienate us, pacify us, and expose us to losses so severe that we can easily cease to be" (61). The very discourse of commitment to teaching, of being engaged in the work and the lives of the students, with which I opened this essay, can both provide meaning and alienate teachers, stripping them of their agency. Such is especially the case when this discourse is coupled with a wider institutional discourse in which it is not possible to express one's emotional responses to the demands of teaching. My response to Judy's journal reinforced her situation by perpetuating the discourse within which she had been constructed as a teacher; so powerful was the discursive pull towards this kind of response that it occurred to me immediately as the way to "deal with" Judy's eruption of emotion. Need it have done so? Could I have engaged in a dialogue about her concerns that might have instead allowed her to revise the discourse within which she was situated, thereby altering her subject position? Could the script have been changed? I'll return to that question later, but for now I would like to describe the effects and consequences of my response.

Despite all my thinking and writing about the importance of the whole person in the pedagogical relationship, I had glossed over what Judy was saying and inserted a timeworn answer to a very real problem. In thinking more about my response, I realize now that I wrote the kind of response that Brooke Horvath, in an early discussion of responding to student writing, termed "summative." My response represented an inadvertent evaluation of Judy as a teacher that found her lacking because she was unable to cope with the workload required of her and the attendant emotions that she experienced. I took it upon myself to supply the right answer, to, in effect, justify myself as the more experienced teacher and to negate her expression of emotion, to overwrite her threatening "outlaw emotions." Whether conscious or unconscious, such a response was an attempt to foreclose any further dialogue about this issue, to avoid having to face my own very real concerns about the issue of burnout in my own teaching life. In retrospect, I now see my response both as a way for me to keep the issue at bay and thus deny the possibility of my own burnout and as a perpetuation of the discourse in which Judy's subject position as a teacher had been fixed. My response was thus a way to deny emotion, both in myself and in Judy.

In writing my comments back to Judy, I had also not seen the implications of a male teacher dismissing or appearing to dismiss a female teacher's concerns about burnout. Without really thinking, I had taken on not only the role of the knowing, more experienced teacher, but also that of knowing the patriarch, condescendingly dispensing knowledge about how the world of teaching *really* worked. At the time I did not see that the institutional discourse in which her subjectivity as a teacher was constructed was itself a gendered discourse which governed who was allowed to speak and in what context.

In my efforts to avoid the issue at hand through cursory attention to it, I had not only re-created the kind of gender dynamic I sought to help eliminate, but I had also completely forgotten about the connections between labor issues and gender in composition which form part of the discursive structure that disciplines the emotions of teachers like Judy. As Eileen Schell articulates, the "ethic of care," often associated with women in the profession, can become a factor leading to continued exploitative labor conditions. Without a doubt, those conditions were present for Judy; she was expected to perform two jobs, plus teach a class in which she describes herself practicing what might be termed "an ethic of care." Though Judy did have an administration willing to deal with her concerns, I had still missed the implications of what she had written to me. It was easy for me to dismiss her concerns since I was not expected to perform administrative work and had a relatively light teaching load. More importantly, my position and gender prevented me from seeing the ways in which I, as a teacher and mentor of teachers, was implicated in this discourse about teaching. In other words, I had not tried to empathize with Judy's position(s), but rather had written a response derived solely from my own location. On many levels, I was not seeing the issues of gender that her journal raised.

In writing this kind of summative response, I reduced teaching to a kind of product, instead of acknowledging that it, like writing, is an ongoing process and that dialogue between teachers, like dialogue between writers, is valuable and sustaining. I might rather have engaged in what Horvath calls "formative" response in an effort to promote dialogue and focus on teaching as an ongoing and dynamic process. Formative response focuses not only on the process (of writing or teaching), but also on the person. If I had been able to give such a response, I would have been attending to Judy's multiple locations in an effort to engage her in dialogue about a difficult issue to which there are no right or wrong answers. In such a dialogue, I perhaps could have helped her to see alternative scripts for revising her subject position as a teacher. Of course, to do so would have meant exposing my own fears about burnout, attending to not only Judy's emotions, but to my own as well. Just as Judy practiced being vulnerable in her teaching and in her journal to me, so should I have been engaged in the same ways in my response to her; such a relationship of reciprocity allows a space for us to begin to revise the ways we are situated in the world. Doing so would have encouraged dialogue between us and laid open the connections between emotion and teaching, thereby fracturing the discourse in which the expression of emotion about teaching is seen as an unacceptable act. Such a move opens up a space in which we can situate "outlaw emotions in relation to those of others" and begin "the process of critically reflecting on those emotions, a process that opens a way to a

critical social practice” (Payne 148). By revising the discourse surrounding teaching so that emotion talk becomes acceptable, we perhaps use the expression of emotion as a starting point for critique and social change. I would like to return to this idea later as I work through possible strategies that we can use as teachers, mentors, and teachers of teachers, but for now, I examine how Judy resisted my initial response and pushed me to reconsider what I had written to her. Without her insistence that I revise my response, and thus my position, I could not have begun to think about these issues.

Two weeks after writing my initial comments, I sat at my desk reading another set of journals. As I read Judy’s, I began to understand how inappropriate my response had been. She wrote,

In closing, I’d like to tell you a story in response to something you wrote in the margins of my reading journal last week. . . . Have you ever seen the movie *A Christmas Story*? It’s a wonderful movie about a little boy named Ralphie who more than anything wants a Red Ryder BB gun for Christmas. He asks his mother, and she says, “No, Ralphie, you’ll shoot your eye out!” When his teacher asks his class to write a “theme” about what they want for Christmas, he writes about the BB gun. He expects to get an A+ on the paper. He gets a C and the teacher writes “P.S. You’ll shoot your eye out!” So, as a last resort, Ralphie decides to go see Santa at the mall and ask him for the gun. He waits in a long, long line to see Santa, and when he finally gets up to ask Santa for the gun, even *Santa* says, “You’ll shoot your eye out, kid!”

Well, I tell you this story for a reason . . . you did a “You’ll shoot your eye out!” to me in my journal last week. I wrote about the self-sacrificing teacher explaining that I am just that because I can not find the balance between teaching the way I feel like I need to teach—which is putting my whole self into it—and preserving control of my life and not letting teaching consume it. *Everyone* tells me I need to hold back or I will burn out. In fact, my supervisor calls me “burnout waiting to happen.” I know this; in fact, I can *feel* burnout slowly seeping into my being. But, I don’t know what to do about it because I don’t know how to *not* give my all to my job. Even when I was a camp counselor, probably the most fun, care-free job in the world, I took my worries about my kids home with me! So I wrote about this in my journal last week to appeal to you for advice, and you wrote, “Be careful or you’ll burn out.” I *know* that. . . help! What can I do about it?

Not only did my comment not seriously address Judy’s concerns, it was actually dismissive of them. It’s clear in reading this entry that she was trying to think through what it means to put her whole self into teaching while still maintaining the rest of her life, trying to find a balance that allows for integration between her location as a teacher and the other multiple locations in her life. How could she remain engaged in her teaching, but avoid becoming consumed

by it? How could she maintain some level of control and agency? I suspect that it is not only the workload that pushes her and other teachers out of the profession, but rather the burden of emotional investment in the classroom and in the students. In fact, Regina Paxton Foehr suggests that it is a complex of fears, including the fear of a loss of control and a fear of not being prepared, that causes strain that “can quickly lead to shattered self-esteem, burnout, and the decision to leave the profession” (336). It is the relationships involved in being an engaged teacher and the emotional energy that is needed to sustain them that are so draining.

So why am I espousing a discourse which encourages teachers to be fully engaged with their students, both intellectually and emotionally? Didn't I say earlier that such a discourse of teaching can contribute to the problem? Didn't I agree with Schell about “the costs of caring”? Why not simply advocate the kind of emotional dissociation often recommended in the professions of medicine and social work? As I see it, however, the problem lies not in the emotional investment that teachers make in engaging fully in the life of the classroom and in the lives of their students, but in the accompanying institutional discourse which does not allow for the expression of emotion about teaching. Instead, I would argue that full engagement in reciprocal relationships with our students is absolutely necessary in the classroom. As Freire writes in *Pedagogy of Freedom*, “hope is something shared between teachers and students. The hope that we can learn together, teach together, be curiously impatient together, produce something together, and resist together the obstacles that prevent the flowering of our joy” (69). Hope is a reciprocal relationship, but one that is demanding and, potentially, emotionally exhausting, especially within the labor structures of higher education in which many people, especially marginalized teachers of first-year writing, teach far too many students per semester under far from adequate working conditions. Perhaps, though, such a relationship of reciprocity, of dialogue about teaching would allow us to engage in critical hope for change in the institutional discourse about teaching and in the material circumstances of teachers like Judy.

As Judy says, even when she was a camp counselor, she would continually bring home her worries about the kids. So it's not surprising that she continues to do so as a teacher. My flip answer about workload demeaned her very real and legitimate concerns. And yet, even if I had understood her question, what would I have said? What is the answer to this problem? How do we theorize the thin line between being invested and being overwhelmed? How do we integrate the emotionality of classroom social practice into our multiply positioned lives without it becoming the sole focus of our lives? How do we “practice being vulnerable” without becoming damaged? How do we maintain our presence in ways that will not become the harbinger of future absence? How do we help teachers like Judy revise their subject positions as teachers without erasing that portion of their identities entirely?

In response to Judy's second journal, I apologized for appearing dismissive and acknowledged in writing my own apprehensions about walking the line between engagement and burnout. Unfortunately, accompanying that acknowledgment was practical advice about taking breaks from teaching and cultivating out-

side interests. Again, I slipped into the role of experienced teacher dispensing wisdom, a strategy which now seems designed to evade the real issue and can be seen as further complicity in the discourse which I am arguing needs to be revised. However, at the end of the note, I had sense enough to reconsider the certainty of my comments and re-open the dialogue with Judy. I wrote, “As teachers, we need to be fully there for our students, but we also need to take care of ourselves. There’s no easy solution and everyone will figure out a different way to deal with it. My only advice is that you need to make sure you look after yourself. Let’s talk more in person.” In her second journal, Judy forced me to foster uncertainty and to acknowledge my own doubts and fears about this very real issue. In doing so, we were able to begin to talk about teaching as a process that happens within the multiple locations of our lives.

At our next class meeting, I talked to Judy at length about her concerns and about my initial response to them. To be honest, I don’t remember what I said to her, but in retrospect, I’m sure I did little more than confirm her sense of how hard it is and tell her that she needed to make time for herself and the rest of her life. The important thing is that we talked and both acknowledged that emotion is part of the process of teaching, just as it is part of our lives. This kind of dialogic reflection, while difficult, was more useful than any canned response I could have given. A week later, she addressed our conversation in the final journal for the semester:

First of all, I want to thank you again for talking to me and for taking my question about how to prevent burn out seriously. I’ve been thinking about what you said, and I’ve been trying harder this week to leave my work at work. Part of my problem is that I know if I don’t do some of my work at home, I’ll have too much to do the next morning when I get to work, and then I’ll have more work to bring home the next night. I’ve been trying not to think about that this week, and it has actually helped. Then this weekend, because we didn’t have much reading, I was able to take some time to relax and go out with my husband. That was nice and has whetted my appetite for the fun things I’ll be able to do in my free time when I’m finished with school. Anyway, I just wanted to let you know that I appreciated your advice and that it seems to be helping a little already.

What’s important here, I think, is that I finally acknowledged the emotion that was behind what Judy had written, both the initial complex of emotions that surrounded her experience as a teacher and the anger at my dismissal of her concerns. And that led me to actually listen to what she was saying, to try to help her understand the complex connections between her location as a teacher and her other multiple locations and the emotions involved in the process of teaching. In other words, I began to practice empathy, what psychologist Daniel Goleman describes as “actually hearing the feelings *behind* what is being said” (145). Despite the credit Judy gives to me, I’m convinced that it wasn’t necessarily what I had to say, but the act of listening that was important. And, while such initial steps were important in beginning my process of thinking about how to help teach-

ers think through their positions and experiences as teachers, I now think that I could have been more effective in my engagement with this very real problem.

A thin line exists between engagement and burnout. I've felt it myself, though in the past I didn't want to acknowledge it because it was too painful to admit, too difficult to see myself as not completely in control. I was forgetting, of course, that emotion is by definition outside of logical control and that emotion that is subsumed by intellect is no longer really emotion. I'm not saying that intellect should yield to emotion, which is nothing but an inversion of the usual binary that is created between the two, but rather that the two should be acknowledged as facets of the whole person, two ways of learning from and responding to our experiences. Burnout is that step beyond the exhaustion that all engaged teachers feel at various points in the semester: when exhaustion gives way to impossibility, when it seems that the only way to deal with things is to simply walk away, especially when the expression of such emotion is deemed unacceptable within the institutional culture where we live and work. Perhaps burnout is the inability to address the emotionality of the classroom and our relationships with students, the inability to keep exhaustion under control by not allowing emotion completely to override intellect through a kind of detachment from the situation. Avoiding such a response is never easy, but I have come to understand that self-reflective talk between teachers is a useful place to start. Of course, being self-reflective about teaching, and especially about the emotionality of teaching, can itself be painful and exhausting. As Robert Yagelski has recently written, "It is one thing to assert that critical teaching can and even should be uncomfortable, but how do we understand and confront this discomfort, this doubt, in our individual efforts to engage in a reflective practice when we know that a sense of confidence is also crucial to effective teaching" (35). Not only is doubt about one's teaching difficult to confront, but so is all emotion in relation to teaching. Reflecting on teaching, however, means acknowledging that emotion is inseparable from our lives as teachers and from our relationships with students, colleagues, and administrators. Turning away from emotion, as I did in my initial response to Judy, is not only unhelpful, but potentially harmful.

So what are the "solutions" to the question of how to "practice being vulnerable" without becoming damaged and of what can we as teachers and mentors of teachers do to help teachers negotiate this situation? As teachers and teachers of teachers we need to begin to open up a dialogue about it, as Yagelski has done with the idea of doubt. To open and sustain such dialogue, we need to practice what Krista Ratcliffe calls rhetorical listening, "consciously standing under discourses that surround us and others, while consciously acknowledging all our particular and fluid standpoints" (205). Such a practice involves "listening to discourse not *for* intent but *with* intent" (205). Rhetorical listening is an act of invention that leads to response within a relationship of mutuality, rather than to the kind of pat teacherly advice that I first gave Judy. Such listening involves empathy, an important strand of what Goleman calls "emotional intelligence." Through such listening, we can begin to engage in "the ongoing process of entertaining alternatives. For it is through such revision that change becomes imaginable, escape from the lonely, isolated world of the merely personal becomes possible, and the redemptive power of theory becomes tangible" (Miller 285). Al-

though I object to Richard E. Miller's bifurcation of the personal and the public, I do see that such a search for alternatives through dialogue between teachers has to be the basis for change. Through sustained dialogue, we can begin to revise the institutional discourses that construct outlaw emotions and instead use emotion as a starting point from which to critique the material circumstances of both teachers at particular institutions and teachers as a whole. Emotion then becomes a way to move, to create change rather than an unacceptable expression of the "merely personal." In this way, we can help to revise the discursive formations that have a very real effect on the lives of teachers like Judy.

The dialogue between Judy and me didn't end after that first journal, but has continued, though in more limited ways, even through my move to another job. In fact, Judy read and responded to an earlier version of this paper before I presented it at the Conference on College Composition and Communication. In her email she wrote:

I thought the article was great! I thought you explained the difficulty with developing a balance well. I am interested to know what your colleagues think.

It is fine with me if you use my first name. There is no need to change anything—you portrayed our dialogue well. But there is one thing I wanted to let you know—I was not angry. I wrote the shoot your eye out thing not out of anger but out of desperation. Everyone was telling me I'd burn out, and I turned to you b/c I thought you'd understand and help me, but then you told me the same thing everyone else did. I wasn't angry, just desperate to talk about it with someone who I thought could relate.

Also, as a postscript, I still get frustrated and worn out on my job, but I am doing better now that grad school is over. I have my evenings and weekends to do what I want to do and to forget about work. Moving to Greenville has helped—being away from the town that I associate w/work. You are right that your listening helped the most, but your advice did too. I make a conscious effort now to include other things in my life, to make time for myself, and that has really helped.

Thanks for sharing this with me, and good luck at your presentation!

Listening to her in this note helps me to once again re-frame what happened through an act of interpretive invention. What I had interpreted as Judy's anger was instead desperation, a plea for someone to take her emotions seriously. I know now that I did not do so, and that, even in my later responses, I was unable to engage her as productively as I should have. In seeing Judy's second note as angry, I had envisioned a greater degree of agency for Judy than she actually felt. At that point, she was past anger and, at desperation, was closer to burnout than either of us has ever admitted to one another. In looking back, I realize that I was equally desperate, though my desperation involved trying to avoid painful emo-

tions that I did not want to acknowledge, either in myself or in Judy. By talking candidly about our emotions, however, we can make an effort to sustain our dialogue about teaching, exploring alternatives and revising the scripts available to teachers.

I received one more email message from Judy as I was doing the revisions for this piece. The editors had asked if I could include more information about Judy's side of the story, and so I sent Judy an email in which I asked if there was anything else she wanted to add. She replied:

My husband and I are really enjoying living in Greenville. We've met lots of people and there's lots more fun stuff to do than in the tiny town of Tarboro.

I also think it's helped me to be away from work (by living in Greenville but still working in Tarboro), speaking of burnout. Tarboro is so small that everywhere I went I'd run into people from work—students or co-workers. I lived so close to work that I'd go in on weekends to get things done. Now when I leave work, I don't think about it as much. It is truly "down" time, and that helps. I do not bring home work on weeknights at all, and bring only about 2-3 hours worth on weekends. So I really am doing a much better job of leaving work at work.

Not being in grad school anymore has also helped tremendously. Since I was getting a degree in something related to my work, I thought about work at work and at home while doing take home work and school work ALL THE TIME. Now that I'm not in grad school, when I'm home I have time for me, time for friends, time for a social life. That has helped tremendously.

I have not taught since Spring 98, the semester that I taught 10 hours along with being tutor program coordinator and retention specialist. I told them I could not teach and do the job they hired me to do. I could do one or the other. Since I was initially hired as retention specialist, they made that a full-time position. It is still busy, as I work with all 14-1500 curriculum students, day and night, on our two campuses (you can see why teaching, especially the self-consuming way that I teach, was enough to push me over the edge on top of all this.) I still put my all into my work, but am learning where to draw lines so as to not get so involved that I wear myself out. I still worry about burn out, and I think my enthusiasm for my job has waned since I started. I can actually feel the apathy slowly growing in me sometimes when I'm feeling especially drained, but I try to keep that in check because I don't want to not care, but I also don't want to care so much that my frustrations drive me bonkers.

In reading this note, I see that Judy envisioned two alternative positions for herself within the available discourses, to continue to teach in the manner she

knew or to get out of teaching. She clearly chose the latter. Could I have done anything to help her imagine other alternatives, to act in alliance with her to revise the discourse surrounding teaching and therefore her circumstances and position as teacher? It is, of course, impossible to say, but I do know that the experience has pushed me to think through these issues for myself as a teacher, but more importantly, for myself as someone who works on a daily basis with teaching assistants and has frequent contact with K-12 teachers.

Of Judy's experience of the situation, I have only these textual traces and my memories of what she said and did during that semester. Looking at this final note, I realize that she made the decision that she needed to make; that note represents the continuation of her story. This article represents the continuation of my story as I attempt to revise the discourses available to me and others in my position for the next time I come in contact with a teacher on the edge of burn-out. ☹

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