

Transformative Teaching: Promoting Transformation Through Literature, the Arts, and Jungian Psychology

With a Foreword by David Booth

Darrell Dobson



Sense Publishers

This is a book that supports teachers, teacher educators and educational researchers as they strive for ways to make their work more authentic, more meaningful, and therefore more spiritual. Dobson describes the practices of exemplary teachers, offers a theoretical framework for transformative teaching, and includes useful examples that the reader can readily include in her own teaching and/or research. Dobson offers two innovative methods of teacher reflectivity (Interacting Narratives and Archetypal Reflectivity) and an original methodology of teaching literature and the arts that draws on the insights of depth psychology. Interwoven throughout the book is Dobson's own story, that of an 'at-risk' student who was deeply affected by his high school experiences with drama and literature. The book will be of interest to teachers in all fields but particularly in literature and the arts. It will appeal to teacher educators, educational researchers, those interested in analytical psychology, those interested in narrative approaches to teacher education, and those interested in narrative approaches to educational research. It will be useful in courses that focus on the construction of teachers' professional knowledge and reflective practices as well as methodology classes in literature, drama, and all the arts. The book will also be of interest in qualitative, arts-based research methodology classes.

From the FOREWORD

In this thoughtful and mindful book, Darrell Dobson chronicles his journey toward professional knowledge and practice as an English and drama educator, in the company of three other travelers, all with background in the creative arts and analytical psychology, a seemingly strange combination of interests and talents, and yet the process moves each of them forward into a deeper understanding of their own personal and professional identities. It is a journey I would hope all of us involved in education would entertain, as we construct, reconstruct and attempt to transform both our philosophy and practice. We change ourselves as we change our students.

By using the lens of Jungian depth psychology in his study of educational transformation, Darrell examines the unseen potential of this body of knowledge, with special reference to its implications on public schooling. It is through the interactive storytelling that emerges between the author/researcher and the participants that we recognize the nature of his quest, and begin to grasp the intent of his complex journey. The four narratives that are the core of the study reveal the life histories, teaching philosophies, and analytical frameworks of educators from diverse settings: a secondary drama teacher, a practising Jungian analyst who teaches undergraduate students, a musicologist and teacher educator, and a high school English teacher who attempts to create transformative learning experiences inside the walls of the institution called school. As I engaged with these narratives, and reflected on their life experiences and the emerging analyses, I was drawn into my own past, my personal as a drama teacher, a consultant, a professor, a writer. Darrell's study includes my story as well, for how can we enter the reflected lives opened to us in this book without adding our own chapter?

The stories we choose to live by cause us, as Darrell writes, "to become aware of the distance between personal and professional life as it is being lived and as it could be lived—and for trying to narrow the space between the two." This storied understanding helps us to construct who we are, and who we can become. Darrell has captured the essence of teacher education: it must begin with the storied self. As he explains so eloquently, this process can transform educators, and move them towards teaching with a holistic underpinning that will change the very nature of their interactions with students. He explores the aesthetic and psychological aspects of teacher knowledge, at both the subconscious and conscious levels, and offers us excellent detailed references from authorities in education and psychology to support and illuminate his theories.

Darrell ends his book with some pertinent questions concerning the challenges of implementing transformative learning into secondary school curricula, alongside teacher education programs. We realize that, like Percival, Darrell's journey has become the learning, which is, as he says, "a daunting characteristic of a maturing personality." He has helped me to continue my own narrative inquiry, to reframe my stories, to refresh my archetypal images, and to rethink my understanding of why and how we could teach. Read his journey, and revisit your own.

David Booth
The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

The book is currently available from amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com in either paperback or hardcover. It also available directly from the publisher at www.sensepublishers.com

You can contact Darrell at d.dobson@tlds.on.ca or editor@thejungiansociety.org

2008, Sense Publishers, Rotterdam, The Netherlands