Variations on Reflection: Dislocation and Academic Rigor

Jake Peters, Service Learning Liaison
Susan Harris, Associate Director
Joint Educational Project
University of Southern California

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many thanks!

>> Dick Cone, former JEP director
>> Carol Wilkinson, Service Learning Coordinator, MiraCosta College
>> Chris Florentino, Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning, CSU Fresno
>> Lorena Boswell, Youth Educational Services, Humboldt State University
why am i driven to talk about “dislocation?”
“... Use what you have learned in Social Inequality to take what you find interesting and turn it into a hypothetical research question. This research question should be both a paper you could imagine Prof. Sternheimer asking you to write about and something that you find interesting, curious, upsetting or otherwise engaging ...”
so ... why are you here?
where this is going:

>> history of reflection and its labor at JEP
>> the work that reflection does
>> talking about reflection in the academy
>> dislocation as a strategy
>> a dislocated exercise
>> “birds of a feather”
reflection is ...
reflection is ...

... not well defined on a slide

... an introspective process that is part of engaging with something new.
Basic Model of Service-Learning
A More Complex Model of Service-Learning
What is our theory of reflection?
“Theory is a guide to action.”
“That life is complicated is a fact of great analytic importance.”

Talking to Service Learning Students about Reflection …

... when describing reflection in class presentations?

... when students start to grumble about writing journals?
Talking to Service Learning Students about Reflection …

» answering reflective questions is required to complete JEP
» it is how we link your volunteer work to this classroom
» it is part of why your professor is able to offer you extra credit
» it can be challenging
but how did this model come to be?
how we got to where we are

…the beginning (1972-late 1980s)

institutional constraints

>> undergraduate labor

limited focus on “academics”

>> open-ended journaling

>> more structured prompts
how we got to where we are

... in the late 1980s

a student intervention in Social Problems:

“what does this volunteer work have to do with my sociology course?”

>> who can do this work?
how we got to where we are

... in the 1990s

lets making reflection academic!
  (in a good way)

>> graduate student position created to
  focus exclusively on reflection
how we got to where we are

... current era (2001-current)

across the disciplines

>> multidisciplinary team of graduate students
develop reflective prompts

>> full-time staff increasingly focuses on big picture / research

>> internet based tools + undergrad labor
“the question is:

how does the nature of your model affect what you can and can't do with reflection?”

-Dick Cone
the work reflection does (or can do!)

>> that elusive link – classroom and community

>> evaluation:
  > students
  > placement fit
  > courses

>> shake up classrooms!

>> better service

>> research and reflection

>> what else? (skills, growth, jobs … … )
reflection = academic?
one thing is certain:

*how we talk about reflection matters dearly*
dislocation + complexity

encourages students to step outside of “I” centered reflection and look at their experiences from another perspective. This can involve taking on a new method, engaging in role play, doing “meta” reflection on process, literally moving students out of place, and in general using imaginative and speculative work to evaluate preconceptions and experiences.
being “out of place”

“DJ Waldie likes to point out that “I don't drive.” Walking and taking the bus are central to how Waldie sees the city and influence his writing style. “Walking the city” simply allows you to see things and take the time to reflect on the landscape and people around you would miss from a car, or even a bike. This week, walk (don’t bike, take the bus or drive) to your JEP site and emulate Waldie's use of walking as a method to research the neighborhood …”
“According to Fiske and Taylor, “People can retrieve from memory quantities of detail about what might be termed the Big Three of person descriptions: appearance, behavior, and traits” (p. 311). **Review your response to the Reflective Question (RF) for Week One. How do theories of appearance-, behavior-, and trait-memory apply to the information you provided in your response to RF#1?”**
“preflection”

“Over the next eight-weeks you will be taking your college education outside of the walls of the University. Based on what you know about JEP and what you know about your site, what do you imagine your JEP experience will be like? Make your imagined vision of your JEP experience specific by addressing these two questions ...”
reflection design

"so much better at it now than we were two years ago. we're new, and we get to tell the rest of culture how we do [our work]."

- Chris Fiorentino
a dislocating exercise
“birds of a feather”

Free Software conventions / unonferences ...