

Frerie's "banking concept of education"

Profession, Teacher



Freire's "The Banking Concept of Education" We've all been students at some point in our lives, but how we are taught as students varies on the teacher and the technique. In the "Banking Concept of Education" it is stated that knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing, it also suggests that the thought of teachers teach and students are taught is old and outdated. I agree with Freire's "Banking Concept of Education" in that in order for a student to become a well rounded individual they need to not be suppressed but encouraged to learn and question different teachings. First, students and teachers should work together to advance their education and keep students on track and interested in learning. In Freire's text he states "From the outset, her efforts must coincide with those of students to engage in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization. His efforts must be imbued with a profound trust in people and their creative power. To achieve this, they must be partners of the students in their relationships with them." (Freire 259) Freire implies that students and teachers must work together to challenge not only the students but each other. When they work together they are striving to educate one another, thus they both gain knowledge and further their learning. This type of learning is crucial for the success and movement forward in education. Frerie also states that "the students, alienated like the slave in the Hegelian dialect, accept their ignorance as justifying the teacher's existence- but unlike the slave, they never discover that they educate the teacher." (Freire 257) When students are in this position and they aren't encouraged to actively participate then they are wasting their education. If they don't ask questions and they just

accept the things the teacher presents to them then they are not challenging themselves or the teacher. When a student asks questions it broadens the topic and things bring light to different situations and views of a topic can change. I've often heard a student suggest something and the teacher respond " I never thought of it that way." Teachers know a lot and are educated to with hold large amounts of information but they aren't all knowing and they realize that. Second, students must be included in teachings and teachers' plans must have things that relate to the students to keep them interested in learning, if students aren't interested in the teachings then school becomes a social outlet for students to socialize. Freire notes this by stating " students, as they are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves in the world and with the world, will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to that challenge. Because they apprehend the challenge as interrelated to other problems within a total context, not as a theoretical question, the resulting comprehension tends to be increasingly critical and thus constantly less alienated. Their response to the challenge evokes new challenges, followed by new understandings; and gradually the students come to regard themselves as committed." (Freire 263) This passage from Freire clarifies that in order for students to become involved in their learning they must actively participate, yet they wont want to actively participate if the items they are learning have nothing to do with them. Most people want to talk about themselves, this also applies to learning, they want to learn things that apply to them, or relate to them. If the things that they are learning have nothing to do with what they experience they are more than likely going to lose interest thus turning

school into a social event. Adams had his own experience with socially accepted schooling when he attended Harvard, " For generation after generation, Adamses and Brookses and Boylsotons and Gorhams had gone to Harvard College, and although none of them, as far as known had ever done any good there, or thought himself the better for it, custom, social ties, convenience, and, above all, economy, kept each generation in the track. Any other education would have required a serious effort, but no one took Harvard College seriously. All went there because their friends went there, and the College was their ideal of social self-respect." (Adams 32) Adams experience at Harvard was typical of his time; Harvard was a socially accepted place for learning. They had the teacher/student interaction that Frerie despises in the " Banking Concept of Education." It was accepted for students to go through the motions and not attempt to do well in school, thus earning its reputation. The teachers at Harvard College were not taken seriously because they did not challenge their students in the way that other Colleges of the time did. They went through the motions of lecturing the students but they had no student interaction, thus losing interest of the student and causing the " Banking Concept of Education" to prevail. Third, students must be encouraged to form their own opinion; they should not be molded into imitations of their teachers, rather unique individuals. " It is not surprising that the banking concept of education regards men as adaptable, manageable beings. The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which could result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them,

the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them." (Freire 258) The more that students are not challenged, the more they adapt to simply accepting information, not even questioning it. After a long period of time of not questioning theories and teachings they begin to relate that trait they have acquired to other aspects of their life. Freire is implying that the "Banking Concept of Education" is forcing people to compromise their individuality to be accepted in society and the world, thus causing the world to not move ahead technologically or socially. When they adapt to their ways of just going through the motions they are conforming to what everyone thinks and does. Emerson asks "is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood." (Emerson 186-187) Emerson is convinced that being different from the norm is what being considered great is about. Although you may be misunderstood in your own time, your great work will be appreciated and looked up to. This is hard to accomplish if you are conforming yourself into a spitting image of your instructor and if you adapt to your teachings and never question things you don't understand. Adams commented on Harvard by saying that "It taught little, and that little ill, but it left the mind open, free from bias, ignorant of facts, but docile. The graduate had few strong prejudices." (Adams 32) He suggests that Harvard didn't teach you much but they allowed you to mold your own opinions and thoughts. The school didn't produce leaders, but that's not necessarily what they wanted men to leave Harvard as. "Harvard College, as far as it

educated at all, was a mild and liberal school, which sent young men into the world with all they needed to make respectable citizens, and something of what they wanted to make useful ones. Leaders of men it never tried to make." (Adams 32) The students of that higher education were left to form their own opinions, yet they were not leaders. They were model citizens, they were what every man would want to be modeled as, yet they were not the ones to be remembered for greatness because they had conformed to what society wanted them to be. In conclusion, Freire's views of the "Banking Concept of Education" were accurate in that the students need to be allowed to mold their own lives, not to be molded by their instructors. When students work together with teachers they are progressing with both their education, and when that is put together with students being active and questioning teachings the education they both receive is more that they could have imagined with the "Banking Concept of Education." Alas students that are encouraged to believe what they believe and not what others believe are more likely to become great people. Not going with the norm of people going through the motions in life but molding their own personality. This type of teaching is revolutionary as Freire called it, and in a sense until it is fully accomplished and accepted it is revolutionary.