TRAINING FOR COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION: POPULAR EDUCATION

METHODOLOGIES FOR WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FOR SOCIAL

TRANSFORMATION

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ABSTRACT

TRAINING FOR COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION: POPULAR EDUCATION

METHODOLOGIES FOR WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

The goal of popular education, as articulated by Paulo Freire and others, is the transformation of communities and societies. There is in need to supplement existing literature with assessment of the outcomes of the practice of popular education in the US, especially under women's leadership. This qualitative research study assesses the outcomes of popular education practice through documentation of the post-training experiences and perceptions of 11 women participants in a popular education training program in the US: Learning - what they learned, Transfer - how the used what they learned and Impact - the effect of their practice on their organizations and communities.

The study found that 1) participants learned theory and skills in order to help people help themselves and experienced significant personal transformation at the same time; 2) participants were able to use TFCT methodologies within their own context to deal with issues of identity and organizational culture and 3) contextual impacts in US contexts are constrained by the diversities of organizational mandate and culture, receptiveness of learners and constraints within the methodology as learned to deal with diversities.

The study concluded that issues of personal transformation, power and positionality within an organization have a critical effect on ability to practice popular education effectively. It also concluded that the diversity and complexity of US contexts pose major challenges for women's leadership using Freire inspired theory and methodologies in the work of community transformation in the US.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Context

The phenomenon of women organizing for social change is not new. History has recorded, although not to the fullest extent possible, women's efforts to gain rights in every arena - domestic, political, social, economic and cultural. The feminism of the 20th and 21st century owes much to the pioneering efforts of Olympe De Gouge, Mary Wollstonecraft, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Sojourner Truth and countless named and unnamed others.

At the beginning of the 20th century the founding of organizations such as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Grail represented efforts of women to enter into a political and economic reality in which they had much experience of injustice but little voice. The UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Nairobi Kenya in 1985 was an important turning point in the visibility of the 20th century work of women's organizing on behalf of social change. At that conference an organization of Third World women researchers, academics and organizers, Development Alternatives for Women for a New Era (DAWN), set out a bold analysis of the workings of the global economy and the ways in which women were disadvantaged and exploited by that system. Their work at the Nairobi Conference was the result of years of organizing within their own countries at the community level and utilizing extension programs of universities to promote participatory education strategies on behalf of social

and economic change. Of great importance to this effort at the World Conference was the insistence that women's lived experience in Third World contexts provided the basic material and insights for the development of their analysis of the global economy. Walters and Manicom (1996) identify this moment in Nairobi as the beginning of 'feminist popular education' because the effort brought together a gender sensitive analysis of global economic patterns as understood through the eyes of ordinary women with participatory education strategies. At the same time sought to use that analysis to promote dialogue among women as well as to bring women's voices into the global public policy debate. This work was also characterized by the use of participatory learning methodologies. According to Walters and Manicom, women found that the insights about listening to people's experience of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire who worked with urban and rural low income communities, echoed feminists' own sense of the critical importance of women's knowledge and experience in building and understanding of work for social change. Popular education is the name given to the participatory educational practices that draw inspiration from the methodologies used by Freire. The use of the word 'popular' is an indication of methodologies that incorporate the participation of learners and especially by those who may be poor and illiterate, persons whose knowledge was not valued by mainstream education.

In Nairobi at the same time were two women of the Grail, Sally Timmel and Anne Hope, who were also influenced by Paulo Freire and had been working on issues of community development there for ten years. These two, -- one white U.S. citizen and one white South African exile, published the three volume organizing guide *Training for*

Transformation in 1984.   The purpose of the three manuals was to train community

workers to use the educational methodologies of Paulo Freire as a part of their organizing

for social transformation.   The original work of Timmel and Hope was the product of

the experiences of the Delta Community Development Training Program, which reached

some 50,000 people in Kenya in 1982; with similar training programs in Zimbabwe,

Nigeria and India; and international courses run by teams in 20 countries. (Hope, Timmel

& Hodzi 1984/1985)   The manuals were grounded in Hope and Timmel's understanding

of Freirean theory and practice. In the years that followed, women's organizations

(including the Grail) were inspired by Freire's methodologies and the Hope/Timmel

adaptation in developing the essential elements in their work of feminist popular

education.

        My own introduction to popular education and the methodologies of Paulo Freire

began in the 1960s, first through meeting Brazilian students who were working with

Freire in the *favelas* of Rio and northeast Brazil and hearing their excited accounts of this

revolutionary method of literacy training and then through a brief opportunity to meet

with Freire himself when I was a part of group of young Christian workers about to be

sent to work for two years in a variety of countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

 During the 1980's Hope and Timmel lived in the US and held a series of training events

to introduce U.S. organizers to their adaptation of Freirean methodology. In late 1989,

they invited me to participate in a Grail sponsored international women's event called

Women Breaking Boundaries. The process of the entire event involved the exchange of

women's stories and experiences for the purpose of building a global\ local analysis of

social and economic realities. Each activity was designed to be highly participatory and interactive.

At one point during the program two women presented a workshop on global economics. This was my introduction to economic literacy. My previous exposure to economics was as something for those I termed the 'mathematically inclined'. Economic literacy has been practiced since the late '80s and early '90s in the United States. It is a participatory methodological approach used by economic justice advocates to help ordinary people reexamine their own economic realities and identify the interaction of global economic forces on those realities. Its goal is to de-mystify economics and make it possible for ordinary people to build their own political analysis but also to develop strategies for social change. Some US women's organizations have used economic literacy to focus specifically on women's economic realities within the changing US economy, especially the identification of differential gender impacts. The economic literacy movement owes much to the experiences and political formation of US and Canadian persons who worked in Central America and Latin America in the '70s and '80s and were exposed to justice advocates who were modeling their educational methods after the methods of Paulo Freire. The activists returned to North America and began to try to adapt and reinvent the educational methodologies that they had learned on behalf of building social and economic change in their own countries and in solidarity with their friends in Latin America.

The Women Breaking Boundaries experience inspired me to learn more about economic literacy and the educational methodologies of Freire and to begin to

incorporate them into my own economic and social justice work. It has been my good fortune to participate in and to witness the practice of feminist popular education at the community, national and international levels since the early 1990's and to be a part of several organizations that have made feminist popular education an essential strategy in their work for social and economic justice.

Origins of the present study

After both of the United Nations World Conferences on Women, 1985 in Nairobi and 1995 in Beijing China, loose alliances of women's organizations were created to consider and promote popular education strategies and economic literacy as a part of their organizing. These conferences, which had given the groups the chance to learn about and appreciate each other, also provided opportunities for these groups to work together in sponsoring popular education events. In the US in 1986 one such group was known as the Women's Alternative Economics Network - a mix of organizations involved in community organizing and popular education. The group included several women's organizations: the Women of Color Resource Center of Oakland California, Southerners for Economic Justice**,** Appalachian Women Empowered, and also the Grail and the United Methodist Women's Division. In 1996 another group was formed which included some of the previous organizations and also *La Mujer Obrera* (Latina factory workers) from El Paso, TX, Alternative Women In Development New York (activists on women's economic issues), Just Economics (feminist popular educators). This newly formed group was known as the Women's Economic Literacy Collective (WELC). The principal reason for this group's formation was a shared understanding that none of the groups had

sufficient opportunity to assess the outcomes of their popular education work. While all the organizations remained committed to the use of popular education methodologies, they wanted to understand how these educational methodologies contributed to their work on behalf of social, economic and gender justice. As a part of Alternative Women in Development New York, I participated in the collective and looked forward to this opportunity to answer some questions about my own work. Unfortunately the groups were unable to secure sufficient funding to carry out the research that they envisioned. This gap of understanding and assessment of the role of popular education methodologies in women's strategies for social and economic justice remains a gap that needs to be filled. One purpose of this dissertation is to fill part of that gap.

Immediate Context: Grail Training for Community Transformation Program.

The Grail in the US is a part of the International Grail, a global movement with presence in 18 countries around the world, of religious women committed to social justice and transformation. The Grail in the US is a network with more than 260 women members as well as scores of other women who participate in Grail activities in thirty-one states and the District of Columbia. I am a member of the Grail in the US. Historically, the focus of the work of the Grail has been local. In a number of cities, Grail houses were established in low-income communities. Grail members lived in these communities and became involved in local justice activities, often taking jobs within the community. Grail women often served as a community resource for both social and spiritual reflection, always intentionally trying to engage a diversity of women. Much of the leadership for this work came from white women. An educational underpinning of

this work was the *Training for Transformation* philosophy. Within the last decade,

economic realities have led to the closure of a number of Grail houses, but the

commitment to work across diversity in local communities remains strong.

The Grail, a partner In the Women's Alternative Economics Network, decided to initiate

its own program to "develop women's leadership for social change at the community

level" (United Program Planning, 2003) In 2002 the Grail in the US created a program

called Training for Community Transformation (TFCT).   The Training for Community

Transformation Program was seen as a new way to make their commitment to work

across diversity a reality and also as a potential source for the internal revitalization of the

Grail itself.

The core curriculum for the training was drawn from *Training for

Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers*, which as noted earlier was based

on the educational methodologies of Paulo Freire as well as organization and community

development strategies of others and developed first for an African audience by Grail

members Hope and Timmel (1984).

The TFCT Program involved a five-day training session, mentoring during a six-

month interim period and a three-day follow-up training session. Three cycles of training

were held between 2002 and 2004: two in English and one in Spanish. The five-day

training session was designed to introduce participants to the participatory/ liberatory

educational philosophy of Paulo Freire and the principal educational techniques used in

the *Training for Transformation* methodology: listening, discernment of generative

themes, the use of codifications and problem-posing dialogue. Interim mentoring

activities during the six months following the training were planned with facilitators to offer mentoring support for trainee efforts in addition Freirean-experienced Grail members living near to trainees we to be recruited to also act as mentors. A list serve was created for exchange of information and discussion. Facilitators also committed to at least one follow-up telephone conversation with each trainee during the interims period. The three-day follow- up training session focused on giving trainees an opportunity to share their experiences in trying to use the methodology and to work together on common problem areas. A small committee, known as the Program Team, made up of Grail members with experience in popular education, oversaw the work of the TFCT Program.

The Problem

A preliminary research project that I conducted in early 2004 involving six participants of the first Training for Community Transformation training cycle, revealed the strong impact of the training on individual women's perceptions of their leadership skills and capabilities. It also showed the wide diversity of experience and capacity to utilize the elements of the training. Critical differences in the context in which each of the women are working, their role in the organization and the nature of the organization itself all affected the capacity of the trainees to utilize the TFCT skills and methodologies. The unevenness of the mentoring dimension of the Program worked to the advantage of some and to the disadvantage of others (Nazombe, 2004).

Based on the findings of this preliminary research, the TFCT Program Team determined the need for a more systematic documentation and assessment of trainee experiences as a necessary component of their task of mapping the future of the Program.

Because the achievement of social and economic justice is the ultimate objective of the Grail, they determined that an assessment should look at the interrelationship of Freirean methodology as a tool for women's leadership development and the possibilities for use of Freirean methodology as a tool for social transformation. Based on the author's participation in the preliminary research study and membership in the Grail, the Program Team invited me to be involved with them in this phase of their task of documentation and assessment of the experiences of the trainees.

Research Question

The core task of this study is to document and analyze the post-training experiences and insights of eleven women who participated in the TFCT Program. The research question for this study was: What do the post-training experiences of eleven women participants in the Training for Community Transformation Program reveal about the applicability of Freirean theory and educational methodology as a tool for women's leadership for community transformation in the United States? Embedded in this question is the interaction of three important dimensions of the study:

(1) Freirean methodology - theory and practice,

(2) Women's leadership in the context of local organizations and communities

(3) Community contexts and the social change realities of the United States

In the record of the post-training experiences I hoped to be able to see how these three dimensions interact both to enable and to constrain the efforts of the trainees.

Approach

In order to answer the research question this study will draw on a combination of perspectives. The research of Vella, Berardinelli, and Burrow published in 1998 developed a model to help organizations assess the impact of work using problem-posing educational methodologies. They have suggested three broad areas of assessment of popular education methodologies, which represent the three dimensions of the study outlined above:

Learning (theory and practice) – What did they learn? What changes in personal knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors are identified by individual trainees as a result of participation in Training for Community Transformation?

Transfer (women's leadership in the context of local organizations and communities) – Where and How did they use what they learned? What new skills, behaviors and attitudes did trainees seek to use in their organization/community work? What were the results? What are the changes (style of leadership, relationships, organizational behavior etc?) identified by the individual trainees in their behavior and their work within the organization/community after their participation in TFCT? What were the barriers that they faced?

Impact (community contexts and US social change realities) – What community problems did the trainees try to work on using popular education methodologies? What were the results of their efforts? What were the obstacles? Were there any changes in the social justice problems, or the way the community worked on social justice problems?

The research revisited the relationships between these three dimensions of popular education articulated by Freire and other popular education practitioners as part of the Literature Review.

The study yielded a rich body of information on the post training experiences of women who participated in the program. The research outcomes were shaped by their voices. Their experiences reflect the diversity of race, ethnicity, class and context which they represent. Their experiences are seen against the backdrop of the goals and purposes of the Grail for the training as well as trainees own personal goals before the training. Their insights should be helpful for the Grail as it seeks to shape future direction of its initiatives to promote education for social transformation.

Rationale and Significance

The last years of the 20th century and the beginning of the present century have witnessed the dramatic rise in the participation of civil society organizations in the discourse over future directions for the social and economic well-being of societies around the world. A string of world conferences held by the United Nations on issues of women, human rights, social development, housing and human settlements, and the environment have forced the governments of the world to open public spaces for debate on critical issues. These international events have been very important in opening up political space for women and grassroots voices, particularly from the Third World, to enter into debates on development and human rights. At the same time beginning in 2000 with the meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle, a movement concerned about globalization has made itself heard in many places. These activities at the global

level are evidence of a wide range of groups operating nationally and locally. A key

strategy for much of this civil society activism is the sharing of information and a

building of collective knowledge and analysis in order to move to action. As citizens

groups teach each other, 'government expert' monopolies on knowledge are broken.

Popular education methodologies have made an important contribution to this effort.

Many believe that this critical work will play an important role in the possibilities for

social transformation in the future.

As groups continue to use these methodologies -- sharing of experiences, gaining

critical perspective on those experiences, building analysis -- it is important that those

interested in social transformation take the time to reflect on the usefulness of these

strategies for the individuals involved, for the communities in which organizing is

happening and for the social injustices that that organizing seeks to redress.

Women's organizations, like those in the alliances referred to above, have made

an important contribution by their insistence on understanding the intersection of gender,

race, and class in the processes of social and economic justice and also social

transformation. A documentation of the use and impact of existing popular education

methodologies can assist such advocates and activists on two levels: as the tool of

analysis that can lead to action and also as a tool to understand the complex interaction of

identity of both educator and learner in the process of learning for action.

There are several potential target audiences for such a research. The Grail itself, having

embarked upon a three-cycle training program to assist women working at the

community level in learning how to use Freirean methodologies in their work for social

transformation, represents a primary organization and audience for the results of such an

research. Secondly, there are many organizations in the United States that are using

Freirean and other participatory methodologies as key strategies for their social change

work, particularly as a leadership training tool. These organizations with their interest in

leadership training could benefit greatly from research on the use of these methodologies

as a means of leadership training.

Understood in its broadest sense, popular education methodologies have a long

history in the United States and Canada. The Highlander Center, which was founded In

the 1930s, is a regional educational facility that has over many years used the

participatory dialogical approach for involving people from the community level in

processes to think about social and economic reality and injustices in the South and in

Appalachia in particular. There is a rich Folk School movement in the U.S. which draws

on similar tradition of community-based, community-determined, community-oriented

education. In Canada, particularly between 1985 and 1995 a significant number of

organizations, both religious and secular, used a participatory and dialogic approach for

important social justice work on poverty, Third World debt, racial justice and other

issues. Many of these popular education practitioners continue to function and are very

much interested in assessing the impact of popular education work.

Finally, women's organizations and particularly feminist activists that continue to

be engaged in social transformation organizing, find in popular education methodologies

a resonance with the emphasis that they place on valuing women's experience and

knowledge. A study of the impact of the use of educational methodologies on women's

ability to organize on their own behalf and on the behalf of others could be very important to them.

The study that was proposed here raised a fundamental question about the connection between popular education and the achievement of social transformation goals. It was able to explore this issue on several levels. First of all, what was the impact of this popular education effort on the achievement of goals of the individuals? How was the individual transformed by this particular methodology of education? What difference did it make in her life? Secondly, can this form of education have an impact on community social change goals? And how did it happen? Did this form of education have an effect on the organizations that the individuals belong to? These are all questions that educators, particularly adult educators, may find yield valuable insights. Educators may also find it interesting to have evidence of when and how knowledge, through such participatory processes, was created and shared. The results of this study can allow educators to think again about the goals of education. Paulo Freire challenged educators to play their role in what he considered the human task of transformation. The study proposed here sought to interrogate that task.

The experiences (storytelling and analysis) of a group of women in one intentional social change educational methodologies training project, the Grail's Training for Community Transformation Project, can add to the body of understanding of the application of Paulo Freire-inspired popular education in the U.S. -- both its methodology and its social transformation goals-- particularly for women seeking to give leadership for community transformation.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Our research question: What do the post-training experiences of eleven women participants in the Training for Community Transformation Program reveal about the applicability of Freirean theory and methodology as a tool for women's leadership for community transformation in the United States?

Overview

In order to document and analyze the experiences of the Training for Community Transformation (TFCT) Program of the Grail, it is important to look closely at the theory and practice of popular education as formulated by Paulo Freire and practiced and adapted by others. The theory and experience of popular education theorists and practitioners can be useful in determining what yardsticks and categories can assist in the assessment the experiences of women in the Training for Community Transformation Program. This literature forms the background context this research.   This review takes its cue from Freirean methodology by attempting to identify the 'principal generative themes' in the literature of popular education theory and practice which can help to inform and shape the research process. What are the concepts and strategies that popular educators feel most strongly about? Because the research aim is to interrogate Freirean practice, the review is restricted to those individuals and organizations that accept Freire's fundamental principle that link education to social transformation.

 It was useful to look at three broad questions:

1. What are the main concepts that define the Freirean theory of 'popular education' – education for transformation, knowledge creation, role and task of the educator, teacher/learner relationships,-? What should be some of the key educational perspectives to listen for in the voices and experiences of the Training for Community Transformation participants? What are the diverse theoretical understandings of the meaning of oppression and the role of education and the educator?

2. What principles of practice and methodology define Freirean educational practice? What have the experiences been of practice by Freire and those who have been inspired by his approaches? What is the mark of authentic Freirean practice? What methodologies have been considered essential and therefore ought to be present in the practice of the Training for Community Transformation participants?

3. What contextual realities necessitate reinvention strategies?

What clues should we look for in the contexts of the Training for Community Transformation participants – national political realities, gender realities, difference and diversity - ? What points of comparison in contexts will the experiences of others provide? What are some of the specific and unique elements of "U.S.-ness" that might be present to pose possibility and/or problem for the Training for Community Transformation participants? What problematic of Freirean theory needs to be resolved in US contexts?

The essential literature reviewed falls into several broad yet overlapping categories: Freire himself; critical pedagogy educator/activists; feminist pedagogy

theorists; feminist popular education practitioners; popular education practitioners in the US and Canada, and US critical education theorists voicing perspectives on the applicability of Freirean practice in the US. The perspectives represented by these broad categories reflect a wide range of identities – race, ethnicity, age, contexts – the US, the Third World, particularly Africa and the Caribbean, and realities – political, social, cultural and economic. As Barndt points out, understanding these identities is critical for understanding and interpreting each perspective (Barndt, 1998). The review of each group therefore begins with a brief picture of the identity of each voice. Although none of these groups address all the questions raised above, taken collectively they yield rich insights into Freirean education theory and practice and its application in North America, insights that are helpful for the analysis of the specific experiences of the TFCT women.

Paulo Freire.

The Grail decision to embark on the Training for Community Transformation Program was based upon its belief that the educational theories and methodologies of Freire provide valuable tools for organizing for social transformation (United Program Planning, 2003). It is important therefore to re-examine the recurring themes in Freire's educational theory and his perspectives on the methodologies necessary to be consistent with those theories. Freire's span some 50 years - from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* his first major work published in 1957, writings to *Pedagogy of Liberation* his final work which was published after his death in 1997. In spite of this long time span there is a consistency as well as maturation evident in his thought**.**   A review also reveals some of the problematic in his thought that constrain the ability of others to "reinvent" his practice

in the other contexts. Identification of these 'generative themes' in the work of Paulo

Freire also provide for the current study Freire's own criteria for assessing educational

practice.

Critical Pedagogy.

*Activist Academics***.**

Within the United States Freire attracted the attention of social justice

activist/educator/academics, from disadvantaged groups, who saw educational tools as a

part of their social transformation strategy. This group was firm in its conviction that the

United States is in need of social transformation. Ira Shor and Antonia Darder provide

helpful insights as educators attempting to incorporate Freirean ideas into the teaching

practice. The generative themes expressed by these two educators are useful because of

their expressed class\ethnic identification of themselves. Both operate as educators from

the perspective of the working-class, one as a White American and one as a Puerto Rican

American. In view of the specific community transformation goals of the TFCT project

these perspectives are helpful in uncovering class and race/ethnicity issues. Shor focuses

on using Freirean methodologies with students from working class backgrounds, while

Darder promotes these methodologies as tools for teachers of color.

It was useful to look at the emphases in their thought that reflects identification

of themselves as a part of the oppressed.   Freire points out the identity of the educator

shapes perspectives on theory and method (Freire, 1995/). Their reports of their struggle

with implementation of Freirean methodologies and the problematic context of the US

can be very helpful.

Feminist Critical Theorists.

Also essential to an understanding of Freire for this research is the body of literature of feminist critical educational theorists who are also seeking to reinvent Freire. Since the Training for Community Transformation Program is specifically directed at women's leadership training for work in social transformation, their perspectives can shed light on our research question. This includes feminist commentary on theoretical Freire, in particular his failure to recognize gender differences in a complex understanding of the nature of oppression -- both within the learning environment and within the social context. Kathleen Weiler, bell hooks, both speaking from the academy but speaking from different identities – one white and middle class and the other African American and reared poor and southern-represent clear voices of those who are particularly sensitive to his failure to take patriarchy seriously but share his commitment to social transformation.

Popular education practitioners.

After the first translation of Freire's work into English in 1970, succeeding generations of English speaking activists around the world have been able to read about his ideas and join the growing group of people involved in the practice of popular education. There is a large number of persons and organizations drawn to Freire because of their commitments to social justice. Around the world local groups made Freire's methodology their own (Walters & Manicom, 1996, Jane Vella & Associates, 2004). It is clear that the influences of Freire seem to have bounced back and forth across the continents and reinforced each other, particularly in nonformal educational settings. Activists in the United States rooted in the civil rights, antipoverty and feminist

movements began to take increasing notice of the work of Freire to incorporate it into their practice.

Feminist Popular Educators.

The writings of feminist popular educators by Shirley Walters and Linzi Manicom, two white South African women, chronicle the emergence of feminist popular education after 1985. Such groups as: Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era (DAWN), Caribbean women's popular educators: WAND, SISTERN and CAFRA, and the Women's Project of the International Council on Adult Education also reported and reflected on their experience. These experiences are useful as a documentation of the implementation of Freirean practice by women. The feminist writings are particularly useful as they also bridge the worlds between community level activists and activist/academicians and feminist researchers.

Myles Horton and the Highlander Center.

Myles Horton was an educator with white working class roots working in the southern part of the United States and in Appalachia with low income whites and African Americans. His work began some 20 years before Freire's work and represents the longest ongoing practice of popular education in the US. It can therefore help clarify popular education practice and the unique elements of the US context that affect that practice and its potential outcomes.

Other Voices for deepening understanding of issues in US context.

The review also considered the perspectives of some activists/academics in the US who provide additional valuable insight on the question of the relevance and

applicability of the theory and methodologies of Paulo Freire in the US. Three white

male academics: Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, and Thomas Heaney speak from the

academy and the zones of their own critical pedagogy activism about the particular

relevance of Freire for efforts at social transformation and the role of education in the US.

Blanca Facundo is a Puerto Rican educator who experimented with Freirean

methodologies in the 1980's. Her account of her negative experience is a helpful counter

balance to the positive experiences of others.

Canadian Practitioners.

In the 1980's, as a result of political turmoil in Central America and Latin

America, U.S. and Canadian activists returning from volunteer work in those areas

brought with them a renewed commitment to the work of popular education. Their

attempts are most clearly exemplified by the work of the Jesuit Centre for Social Faith

and Justice which sponsored the Naming The Moment Project, Doris Marshall Institute

of Canada and the writings of Deborah Barndt, Bev Burke and others. These efforts

provide important information on the experiences of application of Freire in North

America. These writings especially reveal what role issues of difference -- race,

ethnicity, class and gender play in the efforts to reinvent Freire in North American

contexts. These methodologies focus on using Freire inspired practice to uncover the

particular political, economic and social realities of North America. This body of

literature provides points of comparison and yardsticks of measuring the experiences of

the Training for Community Transformation trainees in the US context.

The educational philosophy and practice of Paulo Freire

Before beginning a review of the work of Paulo Freire, particularly seeking answers to the three primary questions of this review, it is important to understand the identity behind the voice and thought Paulo Freire.

The writings of Paulo Freire reveal that he first and foremost identified himself as an educational practitioner. He began his career teaching at the University of Recife in his home area in northeastern Brazil, an area of extreme climate conditions and poverty. In his role as director of the Extra Mural Program of the University, he had the opportunity to be involved in the creation of literacy training programs for local rural and urban communities. In his description of that work we are able to see how his ideas about how learning happens were informed by his own practice in the literacy program. Literacy continued to provide an important paradigm and metaphor for education for social transformation throughout his career.

Biographers indicate that Freire experienced a time of great revelation when as a teenager his middle-class family suffered some economic reverses. (McLaren, 1997/) This economic deprivation was a permanent mark on Freire's thinking about society and society's injustices**.** His early writings also show strong influences from Marxism and Roman Catholic liberation theology. In 1964 Freire was imprisoned for his political views and activities following a right wing coup in Brazil and then exiled. He spent the next 25 years working and lecturing in various parts of the world. As a result of his own early experiences he determined to do all in his power to participate in the liberation of

those who were oppressed. He said: "My point of view is that of the 'wretched of the earth' the excluded" (Freire, 1985 p.66).

What are the main concepts that define Freire's educational theory?

The purpose of education.

It was perhaps the pledge to always be on the side of the oppressed that helped Freire to come to the two fundamental themes which form the heart of his understanding of the educational task. First, Freire posited that transformation is the fundamental human task. He held that human beings are creatures within history that can understand history and therefore have the capacity to transform that history and overcome oppression. This is Freire's fundamental lifelong optimism. "For me, history is a time of possibilities, not pre-determinations. And if it is a time of possibilities, the consequence to come to light is that History not only is but also demands liberty. To struggle and fight for liberty is one possible form of placing ourselves in a history of possibilities, to make ourselves equally possible…History is the possibility that we create throughout time, in order to liberate and therefore save ourselves." (Freire, 1998, p.38).

The history that Freire was operating in was a very specific one, the social and political reality of Brazil in the 1950' and 1960s and the particular form of oppression represented by a capitalist oligarchy. Very clearly defined in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1995/) the work of transformation is the battle between two sets of forces: the oppressed represented by the working-class, poor and the landless and the oppressors by rich landowners and capitalists. In these very early and extremely influential writings these categories of oppressed and oppressor are central. In his writings in the '90s Freire

expanded his understanding of the oppressors to include globalization, neocolonialism

and imperialism. Throughout his writings however these categories remain more or less

rigid. This fundamental belief in the transformability of history is at the core of the

Training for Community Transformation Program itself. The voices of the participants

reveal the perspectives of each individual and whether it was a justifiable expectation.

Role of the Educator.

A compliment to Freire's idea of the role of education as assisting the

transformation process is his notion of the role of the educator. For Freire teaching is a

political task therefore there can be no neutral methodologies. "The real challenge that

faces us, then, is not to insist obstinately, but without success, on affirming the

impossible neutrality of education, but rather to recognize its political nature, to fight for

an ethical - democratic attitude in agreement with educators, who are able and who want

to affirm their own dreams which are themselves political (Freire, 1998, p.39).

Freire insists that that educator must understand the political stance out of which

he/she is operating. That educator must be fully conscious of their own identity and place

within the social system. Freire believed that educators then make choices about whether

their role as an educator is to support and reproduce the existing social system or whether

their role is to be about the transformation of that social system. In Freire's own practice

he always saw his role as that of the revolutionary educator. Imbedded in this

understanding is one of the fundamental problematic of his thought -- the role of the class

identity of the revolutionary educator. It's worth a brief explanation here because when

looking at the practice of Freirean methodology in the other places it represents a major concern.

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* Freire insists that the oppressor cannot be the revolutionary educator. At the same time he described how the educator can transcend his/her class identities. He believed that the person from middle class would need to commit what he termed "class suicide" in order to be in solidarity with and work as an educator among the oppressed (Freire, 1995/). From Freire's description of his own literacy practice in Brazil we know that he called on sociologists and other University persons to assist in recording and observing experiences at the community level. He does not explain precisely how these University trained persons purged themselves of their class identities in order to be able to observe and record their observations of members of the oppressed class. The weakness here is the lack of articulation of a critical perspective on himself and those who assisted him in terms of their class perspective. This provides an important caution as we proceed to look at the situation of other educators as they attempt to reinvent and translate Freire into different contexts. In *Pedagogy in Process* he expresses some of this critical perspective as an outsider to the situation of Guinea Bissau, but still class identities of the educators do not explicitly come under scrutiny (Freire, 1978).

It is important to note here in passing also that particularly in his early writings gender identities of educators are not mentioned or problematized. Women may have been involved in his early literacy work but he does not comment on it. He does however

make frequent reference to his wife's involvement in his work in Guinea Bissau (Freire, 1978).

What principles of practice and what methodologies define Freirean practice?

Following on his two basic points of transformation as the fundamental human task and teaching as a political task, Freire goes on to describe the nature and goal of the educational task and the tools for that task which in his view follow necessarily from his two basic premises.

Authentic Practice.

For Freire education is relational. Freire describes the educational context as one in which the educator is also a learner, and the learner is an educator. This development of a kind equality between the learner and the educator is central. Freire names this process dialogue. Knowledge discovery comes in the interaction of dialogue. It is here that the possibility of the development of critical consciousness emerges. But, if an educator cannot also be a learner then he /she is not a revolutionary educator. It is the dialogue between the educator and the learner that enables this relationship. Freire is emphatic that the educator is not a depositor of information ("the banking method") whether it is in the support of the status quo or revolutionary propaganda. The tools at the disposal of the revolutionary educator must be consistent with the political stance of the educator. The educator cannot espouse democracy and refuse to honor the knowledge

of the learner. He asserts that the educator must have authority but not be authoritarian.

There must be a unity of goals and methodology (Freire, 1995/).

The goal of dialogue is to create an educational environment in which

conscientization - critical consciousness can be developed. In using this concept Freire is

attempting to describe a process of discernment in which both the educator and the

learner are transformed through "identifying contradictions in experience through

dialogue and becoming a 'subject' with other oppressed subjects—that is, becoming part

of the process of changing the world" (Heaney, 1987, p. 7).

In 1997, not long before his death, Freire described poetically what goes on in the

dynamic learning process that he envisioned: "to opt, decide, break, project, dream, and

remake themselves while remaking the world; they must become capable of valuing, of

dedicating themselves to the point of sacrificing for the dream that they fight for, of

singing the world, and admiring beauty." (Freire, 1998, p. 66).

The first part of the process is the articulation of the concrete reality of the

learner. This is the information that the learner brings to the learning situation. The

learner understands and can describe his/her concrete reality. But Freire contends that

this doesn't necessarily mean that the learner understands why a particular reality exists.

So the task of the educational process is to uncover these root meanings. Freire describes

this process as "reading of the world" (Frere, 1995/). This is a collective process not just

something between the educator and a single learner. Development of knowledge

requires sharing.

Methodologies.

Listening and Codifications.

In *Pedagogy for the Oppressed* Freire illustrates the process from his experiences with literacy work in northeastern Brazil. To begin Freire called for a process to gather information (listening) from the learners about their concrete situation. The result of this gathering of information is the determination of what Freire identified as generative themes. As indicated earlier, generative themes represent those aspects of concrete reality that are most important to the learner, those aspects that generate the most feeling and emotion. Then, along with his friends that from the University (sociologists etc.) he developed what he called 'codifications' based upon those generative themes. A codification is a picture, story, song etc., some kind of representation of the concrete reality as described, a representation that the learner can recognize. It is a means by which the learners can take a second look at that reality and through a process of dialogue together with others come to a deeper understanding. Freire calls this process problem posing. The codification does not provide an answer; it simply provides a fresh perspective on the reality in order to allow the learners to ask questions together and to come to an understanding about root causes that help develop a critical perspective or consciousness on their own reality. He named this discovery 'reading the previous reading of the world' (Freire, 1978). For Freire this process always should lead to a discussion of possibilities for action to transform that reality and then to action.

Praxis

One other step is important in the educational process. Once the action is taken there must be a space for reflection, for assessment and research in order to begin again the cycle of discovery and continuing learning that is the part of the revolutionary educational process. Using the literacy paradigm, Freire often speaks of 'literacy and post literacy'. He is referring to the development of political consciousness not as the static one time discovery but it ongoing discovery (Freire, 1978). The name that he gave to this ongoing process of learning, action and reflection is *praxis.* "Men and women are human beings because they are historically constituted as beings of praxis, and in the process they have become capable of transforming the world – of giving its meaning" (hooks 1994, pg. 14). The ability to reflect on experience Freire suggests is what differentiates human beings from animals (Freire, 1995/).

The basic tools developed by Freire – listening, generative themes, codes, praxis were the core skills promoted in the Training for Community Transformation program, the research documented how these skills were used by TFCT participants in their own contexts.

What contextual realities necessitate reinvention strategies?

Freire was emphatic in his call for the reinvention of strategies in different contexts. "The progressive educator must always be moving in and out of his or her own context continually reinventing me and reinventing what it means to be democratic in his or her own specific cultural and historical context" (Darder, 2002 p.v).

His documentation of his own practice in Guinea Bissau during his exile gives testimony to his attempt to reinvent himself and his thought in that context. In 1975, while working with the Department of Education of the World Council of Churches he was part of a team invited by the newly independent government of Guinea Bissau to help design the new nation's first literacy education program. *Pedagogy in Process* is a record of Freire's correspondence with the Minister of Education about the project. In 1975 and 1976 Freire and his colleagues made suggestions on a process for literacy education and with a small team of outsiders made several visits to the country to discuss the project and meet with literacy trainers. Entering the Guinea Bissau context not long after independence from Portugal was achieved; Freire shifted his strategy from a pre-revolutionary context to a post-revolutionary one. He believed that literacy education must be an integral part of a national development strategy that combined political education and the development needs of an agricultural economy. The tools like culture circles and generative themes remained relevant but the content of the dialogue conversation was different.

Critical Education Practitioners

"It is impossible to export pedagogical practices without reinventing them. Please tell your fellow American educators not to import me. Ask them to re-create and rewrite my ideas" (Freire, 1997, p. 308).

Two critical educators working within the context of the academy present their own unique perspective on Freirean his methodologies: Ira Shor and Antonia Darder. It

is helpful to consider them together because they each represent themselves as having origins within what might be understood as the oppressed and their concerns with Freire in theory and methodologies are directly related to that identity. These perspectives on the problematic of the US context can be especially helpful.

Ira Shor is professor of English at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York where he teaches composition and rhetoric. He explains that he is the son of a working-class family and his IQ scores led to "tracking" out of his community and into the role of university intellectual. For six years he taught open admissions students (predominately white working-class learners) at Staten Island College. The public school is the location of his primary interest. His own background and the target population he serves places him in the category of a person from a marginalized group although he and many of those he teaches are from the US racial majority. Shor had a long association with Paulo Freire, co-authoring several talking books with him.

Antonia Darder is a professor of educational policy studies and Latino/a studies at the University of Illinois, poet and political activist. Darder describes herself as "a Puerto Rican working class woman who lived in poverty for the first twenty-five years of my life" (Darder, 2002, p.149-150). Darder brings this perspective of a working-class Puerto Rican woman turned academic educator to her reading of Freire: "Freire's writings...it was the first time that I felt that the plight of students from subordinated cultural communities was addressed from the perspective of the social reality of our subordination, rather than of the projected images and myths of dominant cultural

interpretations" (Darder, 2002, p. 150). She acknowledges Freire as "my father in the struggle" (Darder, 2002, p.xiii).

What are the main concepts in Shor's understanding of Freirean popular education?

Shor uses the words "liberating education" and "empowering education" to describe his basic understanding. Shor's view of education is in harmony with that of Freire: the purpose of education is to contribute to the liberation of people. He elaborates that, the educational environment is the place where both the individual and the society are constructed. There it is that the future is at stake for both. He sees the educational context as a contested zone and that the work of liberating education must be the work of the socialization, transforming individuals who can contribute to the transformation of society. Going beyond Freire, Shor emphasizes the connections between the individual and society: "empowering education approaches individual growth as an active cooperative and social process because the self and the society create each other...personal growth is related to public life by developing strong skill, academic knowledge, habits of inquiry and critical curiosity about society, power, in each quality and change" (Shor & Freire, 1986 p.15). This emphasis on individual transformation as a part of the process represents an important elaboration or perhaps potential reinvention for the U.S. context.

What are the principles of practice and methodologies that define Freirean educational practice?

In the context of the school Shor discusses the limitations and the possibilities of liberating education.   In his view, liberating education alone cannot transform society. He feels that this is important to keep remembering this truth so that no one mistakes the meaning of dialogical learning (Shor & Freire, 1986).   Shor also sees multiple sites for the possibility of this work of transformation. Social movements represent other places where people gather consciously to reconstruct themselves and society. The movements have an autonomy that is lacking in formal classroom. They have more freedom to act on behalf of social transformation and can engage in critical education more freely (Shor and Freire, 1986).

Authentic practice.

Shor emphasizes the nature of the relationship between teacher and student in the authentic practice of empowering education. He describes it as a negotiated democratic process involving both the student and the teacher for the purpose of mutual creation and recreation of knowledge. He believes that in this exercise of developing the power to remake knowledge, the power to remake societies is asserted. The task of the teacher is to model what it means to be an active, skeptical learner inviting the students to emulate that creativity and curiosity (Shor & Freire, 1986).

Methodologies.

Shor described the methodology that Freire named problem posing education. The teacher poses problems drawn from the life of the students, social issues, and

academic subjects whatever information would be most relevant to the students and makes a direct connection between their lives and learning. There are three steps in the process: (1) listening – discovering the generative its themes in the concerns of students; (2) mutually created dialogue; and (3) action (McLaren & Leonard, 1993).

What contextual realities necessitate reinvention strategies?

Shor raised basic contextual questions with Freire in a dialogue entitled "Do first world students need liberating?" The questions and their answers frame Shor's understanding of the possibilities and the problematic of application of Freire in the US context as well as something about the methodology that would be necessary.

1. Do the differences between North America and Brazil invalidate the method in U.S. classrooms?

Shor believes, like Freire, that a comparable system of injustices exists in the United States and that the school is implicated in its perpetuation. He believes that in the US it is the 'democratic' environment that constructs and reproduces inequality. The school, in particular, is responsible for the social construction and reproduction of inequality. This is because inequality is presented as natural and just given the differing aptitudes and achievements of various groups within society (Shor & Freire, 1987).

2. Can dialogic education work in the prosperous in North and what would look like?

Reflecting on his own students, Shor contends that the main difficulty with the education in the U.S. is that there is a sharp disconnect between the words that students read in their textbooks and the world in which they live. The school world does not relate to the world of their real experiences. Critical thought is separated from living. The task

of liberatory pedagogy would be to make these connections. The problem Shor suggests

is that liberatory pedagogy, in the context of the school, contradicts the logic of

domination and challenges the social relations of inequality and learning that inhibit

democracy and critical thought. Sounding very much like Freire, Shor asserts that

dialogue offers hope of a true relationship between the student and the teacher, and open

discussion of reality involving them both (Shor & Freire, 1987).

Shor describes the methodology that would be necessary for the development of

this relationship. He uses Freire's concepts of problem posing education. He contrasts is

with 'problem solving' and contends that it would be particularly applicable to

immigrant/refugee and ESL students and to workers who have little control over their

situation. Using this methodology students learn to go beneath the surface to question

answers rather than merely accepting standard answers to questions. He believes that

students would then be responsible for structuring their own learning using their own

lives as the sources of the content. In this way they might be able to envision different

realities and create individual and community responses to their problems (Shor, 1987).

3. Do Freire's notions of empowerment and the culture of silence fit?

Mirroring Freire, Shor describes a "culture of silence" that is present among U.S.

students. Shor believes that the marginalized student in the U.S. has developed his/her

are own response to the system that does not respond to their needs, in which they feel

disempowered. It is a culture of aggressive rejection and sabotage, a deliberate silence.

He asserts that counter/alienation pedagogy will be needed to overcome, this "culture of

silence". He recognizes that given the domination that generates this "culture of silence"

some students will find it hard to believe the approach of the liberatory teacher. Also because students are in class randomly, their acceptance of deliberate liberatory transformation is likely to be uneven. In other words, liberatory education will not automatically be successful but the conditions within schools are ripe for its effective use (Shor, 1987).

In a more general critique of the realities of the US and the possibilities of the development of critical thinking as proposed by Freire, Shor comments that workers are socialized to believe that the system is invulnerable and that the only way to beat it is to play by its rules. In this context the task of liberatory education would be almost impossible. These insights into the educational realities for students from oppressed groups were be helpful in understanding the reactions for TFCT participants and their constituencies to efforts to employ Freirean methodologies.

What concepts within Freirean theory and practice are the most meaningful for Antonia Darder?

In her book *Reinventing Freire: A Pedagogy of Love*, Darder draws on Freire's long writing history to reinvent and rearticulate Freire's basic understandings for the US context.   As a teacher/educator/activist, Antonia Darder's focus is the school but she sees the school in context of the realities of the broader society. For Darder the root causes of oppression are economic. Globalization, as capitalism's more complex and sophisticated current incarnation, must be seen by teachers as the context for the work of schools. Darder sees schools as sites of struggle with capitalism. She sees the schools as places that perpetuate privilege and entitlement, and mislead working-class students about the

realities of race and class. She articulates the direct connection between the issues of race

and ethnicity within U.S. communities and the issue of poverty to the realities of access

or lack of access to power. She understands education as both a political calling and the

subversive force. Within this framework she understands an educator's project to be one

of re-thinking the meaning of democratic schooling (Darder, 2002).

What practices and methodology define popular education practice?

For Darder revolutionary praxis has two components: transformation of

consciousness and reconstruction of social structures, both are essential. Darder sees

teachers as subjects of history who must take ethical responsibility for their practice.

Teachers will need to be both cultural workers and social activists (Darder, 2002). A part

of that responsibility is for the teacher to question his/her own role in the production of

injustices. In *Reinventing Freire – A Pedagogy of Love*, Darder shares several examples

from her students in their attempts to apply Freirean methodologies in the school context.

Her students are teachers from the earliest primary grades through teacher education. Her

students underscore the need for critical/dialogic education especially for students of

color because in the U.S. "ideologies of racism and class conflict function to distort the

realities and conditions of working-class students, particularly those who come from

subordinate cultural backgrounds" (Darder, 2002, p.16). For example, a bilingual

primary school teacher, reflecting on her own identity, describes how she sought to make

her classroom a "bi-cultural mirror" to assist students with the identity negotiations that a

member of a subordinate culture in the midst of the dominant culture must make. She

also undertook, faithful to her understanding of critical pedagogy, to examine power

relationships within the school and within the community and within her own role as the teacher.

Another teacher relates the experience of confusion created for both parents and students of children from minority cultural and linguistic groups when participating in a system of schooling that needs to perpetuate a cultural history that distorts or misrepresents the history of their own group. In both cases teachers concluded that it was absolutely imperative from the earliest moments of education to create a critical space to challenge such debilitating methodologies (Darder, 2002).

From primary school through teacher training, Darder's students underscore the need for critical/dialogic education, especially for students of color because of the way racism and class conflict operate in US society.

What contextual realities does Darder believe necessitate reinvention strategies?

Darder's basic interest appears to be in the implementation of the strategies proposed by Freire in light of sensitivity to the specifics of the U.S. context.   She finds a consistence and relevance to his thought from his earliest writings to the final ones.   She notes that students of color challenged Freire on his attitudes about identity politics but concluded that the thinking of the students was naïve and that Freire's class centered identification of the oppressed and the oppressors was more accurate (Darder, 2002).

Some of the key US contextual realities that Darder identifies reflect Freire's insights about citizenship, democracy, the role of the community and the task of the teacher in the process of social transformation. She describes these realities in a specific way. For example, she believes that children who come from families struggling economically, culturally, politically in the U.S. will benefit from critical pedagogy because they already know that all is not just in their world. (Darder, 2002) The research documented how immigrant women who participated in the TFCT program were able to utilize the contradictions in their contexts as a part of their educational strategies.

Feminist Pedagogy

One group of critical educational theorists who find the value in the theories and practices of Freire are women who identify themselves as proponents of feminist pedagogy. Kathleen Weiler has helpfully pointed out that "It is now common to assert that there is no authoritative feminism, but rather feminisms, thus acknowledging both competing discourses and the significance of other categories and loci of power" (Weiler, 2001 p. 67). This understanding is particularly useful when viewing the perspectives represented by different feminist educators. Two women who have been outspoken in their commentary on Freire are Kathleen Weiler and bell hooks. Weiler and hooks represents two different perspectives on Freire. Although they share many things in common, the differences in their own identities are important in the differing emphases in their perspectives on Freire, feminist pedagogy and its relevance to women.

bell hooks describes herself as a "black woman intellectual, revolutionary activist". It is through this identity that she views the writings of Paulo Freire. bell hooks was born in Kentucky into a poor family, one of seven children. Her father was a school custodian and her mother was a homemaker. She grew up in a segregated town and went to segregated schools. She's currently the Distinguished Professor in Residence at Berea College. The focus of her writings is on the 'interconnectivity of race, class, gender and their ability to produce and perpetuate systems of oppression and dominance' (Contemporary Educational Thought, n.d.).

hooks says of Freire: "He was one of the thinkers whose words gave me a language. He made me think deeply about the construction of an identity of resistance...." And "growing up in a rural area in the agrarian South, among black people who work the land, I felt intimately linked to the discussion of peasant life in Freire's work and its relationship to literacy." (hooks, 1993, p. 149).

Freire's identity, a revolutionary man of the Third World, appealed to hooks as a more authentic voice for the articulation of her own identity with oppression than white feminists of the second wave feminism that purported to speak for all women. "Returning to the discussion of feminism and sexism, I want to say that I felt myself included in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which was one of the first Freire books I read, in a way that I never felt myself -- my experience as a rural black person -- included in the first feminist books *I* read, works like *The Feminine Mystique*, *Born Female*, etc. (hooks, 1993, p. 150).

Kathleen Weiler is a professor of education at Tufts University. Her mother was

a teacher in rural California and she writes that that experience shaped and led her to

question understandings of the role of women teachers. Her writings have focused on

social, historical, and political context in relationship to gender, particularly feminist

theory and pedagogy, teaching and scholarship especially as they relate to issues of social

justice and democratic education. Weiler lens on women's leadership grows out of her

recognition the privileges of her class, race and nationality over against reality of the

history of gender oppression. Of the importance of Freire Weiler had this to say "As an

eloquent and impassioned statement of the need for and being possibility of change for

reading the world and the word, there is no comparable contemporary text." (Weiler,

November 1991, p. 452).

When considered together these two women provide useful insights for reflection

on Freire methodologies as practiced by the women of the Training for Community

Transformation program.

What are the main concepts that define Freirean theory from the perspective of feminist pedagogy?

Proponents of feminist pedagogy like Weiler and hooks list some of the same

fundamental concepts that were seen earlier in Shor and Darder. Weiler quite simply

says: "What does Paulo Freire mean to those of us who define ourselves as feminist

educators? … First of all I would like to suggest that feminist pedagogy like feminism

itself is ultimately a political project." (Weiler, K. 2001, p. 67). Like other forms of

critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy is grounded in a vision of social change, a vision which affirms the possibility of transformation of oppressive of structures within society. It affirms, like Freire, the capacity of human beings to understand their own reality and to engage in action to that would transform that reality. Although using different tools both agree on a critical importance of the link between the content of education and the methodology used in the educational context.

However, feminist pedagogy has distinctive characteristics beyond those specifically articulated by Freire which both challenge Freirean understanding and improve upon it. For the feminist educator, patriarchy, the structures of male power and dominance are always an important factor in understanding the educational task. "The work of the feminist educator is to try to create the conditions for a female speaking subject as a part of the larger political and social project against patriarchy as well as against racism and class exploitation." (Weiler, 2001, p. 84) This understanding is one that feminists find missing in Freire.   bell hooks described it this way "There has never been a moment when reading Freire that I have not remained aware of not only the sexism of the language but the way he (like other Progressive Third World political leaders, intellectuals, critical thinkers such as Fanon, Memmi, etc.) constructs a phallocentric paradigm of liberation - wherein freedom and the experience of patriarchal manhood are always linked as though they are one and the same." (hooks, 1993, p. 148).

Kathleen Weiler has called for the development of a "situated pedagogy". " This emerging pedagogy does not reject the goals of justice -- the end of oppression and

liberation -- but frames them more specifically in the context of historically defined struggles and calls for articulation of interests and identity on a part of a teacher and of the students as well." (Weiler, 1991, p. 450) Understanding and acknowledging identity, difference, the intersection of oppressions are all key elements of a feminist pedagogical understanding.

Further nuancing of this perspective is feminist pedagogy's understanding that any individual might be both oppressor and oppressed, an individual whether educator or learner might simultaneously be in both of these positions. This suggests, Weiler concludes, that there is not necessarily a common experience of oppression, but the experiences of oppression will vary with the positionality and the complexity of the identity of the oppressed/oppressor. (Weiler, 1991)

These understandings lead directly to a more complex understanding of the role of the educator. "…Freire fails to address the various forms of power held by teachers depending on their race, gender and the historical and institutional settings in which they work. In the Freirean account, they are in this sense 'transparent'" (Weiler, November 1991, p. 460). In each educational context these dimensions of the teacher's identity are at play and impact the amount of authority that the teacher can exercise or that the teacher is viewed to have. She looked at this from a very personal point of view:

> As a white feminist living in working in privileged settings I benefitted from the structures of race and class in profound ways....the question of location highlights the relationship of social identity and of real authority....we need to consider and articulate the meaning of our speech in relation to our own political goals so that the impact of our speaking does not reinscribe dominance simply by our tone and

social identity...the danger of reinscribing privilege by taking on an unquestioned authority in speaking.   (Weiler, 2001, p. 73).

The voices of many of the TFCT participants were immigrant voices representing a variety of class positions and ethnic positions which affected their ability to practice Freirean methodology.

hooks adds to this the idea that the educator must be prepared to enter fully into involvement with students what she has named 'engaged pedagogy. hooks echoes Freire in describing education as the practice of freedom and portrays a mutual process within the classroom this way including the risk of articulating and claiming particular identity.

students are not the only ones who are asked to share, to confess. Engaged pedagogy does not seek simply to empower students. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow and are empowered by the process. That empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable will encourage students to take risks. (hooks, 1994, p. 21).

What principles of practice and methodology define feminist pedagogy that reflect Freirean perspectives?

Feminist pedagogy names essential elements of practice: interrogating and valuing specifically women's experiences as a source of knowledge and using that knowledge to build a critical understanding of forces of oppression that shaped those experiences. Weiler calls for "recognition of the positionality of each person in the discussion of what can be known from experience" (Weiler, 1991, p. 467).   This perspective expands on Freire's view about the importance of valuing the knowledge of the oppressed. Feminists want to insure that a diversity of women's experiences are

included in these new sources of knowledge about oppression. This is something that

Freire himself does not speak about. In fact, at one point in describing his experiences in

Guinea Bissau he indicated that he did not witness any examples of women experiences

being silenced by men (Freire, 1978).

The classic methodological tool used by feminists is consciousness-raising. This

tool is equivalent to and contains the essential elements of Freire's conscientization and

dialogue. The goal of consciousness-raising, according to Weiler, is focused on collective

political change not individual therapy. She recalls Kathie Sarachild, a veteran feminist

activist's comments in an essay: "…You might say we wanted to pull up weeds in the

garden by their roots, not just pick off the leaves at the top to make things look good

momentarily." (Weiler, 1991, p. 457).   She adds that a second fundamental aspect of

consciousness-raising is the reliance on experience and feeling. The issue here is the

feminists' insistence that knowledge not be limited to what was traditionally understood

that is the logical, rational, public world i.e. the world of men. The private everyday

world where women often live was ignored and therefore 'knowledge' did not include

their experience. The reason women needed to expand the areas for knowledge creation

was because of profound distrust of accepted authority and truth. It is interesting

however that one of the characteristics of consciousness-raising groups, besides the

common sharing of experience, was that the group was to be collective and leaderless

(Weiler, 1991, p. 457).

What contextual realities do feminists educators believe necessitate

reinvention strategies?

Both Weiler and hooks operate predominantly in the context of the academy. They are not operating in the kinds of contexts that are represented by the TFCT women however they believe that their sensitivity to the issues of difference and the realities of intersecting oppression are particularly relevant to feminist pedagogy as practiced in the United States. The 'U.S. – ness' of identity, the historical, social and political context should never be unrecognized in educational practice, this is true for critical educators regardless of their identity and their location.

> In American society where the intellectual, specifically the black intellectual, has often assimilated and betrayed revolutionary concerns in the interests of maintaining class power, it is crucial and necessary for insurgent black intellectuals to have an ethics of struggle that informs our relationship to those black people who have not had access to the ways of knowing shared in locations of privilege. (hooks, 1993, p. 151).

In the U.S. context hooks is here cautioning African-Americans who seek to operate from the critical pedagogical stance of the need to recognize their own class positionality as they seek to work with those from within their own identity whose class is different.

In a similar vein, Weiler points to the lessons learned from black, Asian and Latino women in the United States about the way in which the universally identified "woman" both obscures the meaning of race in a racist society, of class power of oppression, age, or other kinds of differences as deviations from the mythical norm. She

adds, "…in a similar way women of color have challenged earlier assumptions about

common experience and interest among all women by providing the critique of

patriarchal rationality from the perspective of those doubly marginalized by racism as

well by patriarchy" (Weiler, 2001, p. 72). It was important to document how the race and

class position of TFCT participants affects their efforts to utilize Freirean methodology.

The Popular Education Practitioners

While the perspectives of critical and feminist pedagogy theorists are interesting,

it was also helpful in preparing to answer the present research question was looking at the

perspectives and practices of those persons and organizations that are actually fully

engaged in using popular education.   The Training for Community Transformation

Program was about popular education practice, theory was involved in that training but

practice was the primary goal of the project.

Popular education practitioners represent a broad spectrum of educational

practices and methodologies even though they share some important similarities in terms

of goals of education. Some popular educators use education for the development of

analysis of situations economic and political. Other popular educators link their work

closely with direct community development and community organizing activities. Other

organizations have focused on developing training materials for using popular education

by a wide variety of types of groups.

Some popular education methodologies may look like an attempt to replicate the

methodologies described earlier that were used by Paulo Freire himself in his early work

in Brazil. Other groups have taken the basic principles and reinvented them in the

context of using drama, role-playing, personal narratives, photography etc. as ways to explore and articulate experiences and build analysis. Freire's educational principles can also be seen in a wide variety of participatory research efforts in various parts of the world. There is no one model for popular education. Popular education is by its very nature is constantly adaptive to the reality of those involved in learning. However the basic principles of valuing knowledge of learners, of a learning environment as a democratic arena, and education for action and social transformation are critical elements of all of these different manifestations of popular education. One other element is the fundamental commitment to education for transformation for those who are oppressed, often those in poverty, especially at the grassroots level.

In this section of our review we look at the work and perspectives of primarily three overlapping groups: (1) feminist popular educators; (2) popular educators working within the U.S. context; (3) popular educators working in the Canadian context. This overview of popular education practice of necessity includes some references to global organizations and global events in which popular education has played a key role. For each of the three main groups we sought to understand what lessons have been learned that can be valuable for the present research: such as what oppressions have been named, what insights have been gained on the role of facilitators, and finally what contextual issues enable or constrain the work of popular education.

Feminist popular education and its practitioners.

Women involved in using 'feminist popular education' represent a wide spectrum. In 1992 the Women's Program of the International Council for Adult Education held a

seminar entitled "International Perspectives on Gender and Popular Education". This

seminar focused attention particularly upon the connection between women's oppression

and the strategies of popular education. Women attending the conference came from

every region of the world. Their interests included a variety of concerns including

violence against women to women, both agricultural and industrial workers, the

relationships between intellectual women and grassroots women. They also focused on

the contradictions and complications surrounding the intersection of issues of race, class

and gender. Looking across the spectrum of feminist popular educators it is important to

note that there is heavy evidence of academic/intellectual women involved in facilitation

of popular education for grass-roots women. This is true everywhere from India and the

work of SPARC (Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres), an organization

working with urban poor women; to the work of organizations like WAND(Women and

Development Unit of the Extra Mural Department of the University of the West Indies),

the Sistern Theatre Collective and CAFRA(Caribbean Association for Feminists

Research and Action) in the Caribbean in which middle-class women linked with

unemployed urban and rural poor women to create advocacy strategies for development.

DAWN (Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era), referred to earlier, is a

global network of researchers and activists that does education and advocacy work at the

national and international level on a broad range of development issues and using

feminist popular education as a strategy in its work. Feminist popular educators are often

working across the lines of race and ethnicity as well as class and their reports of their

work bear evidence of these intersections.

Although the Training for Community Transformation Program did not describe itself as a feminist popular education program, it is useful to review the work and perspectives of feminist popular educators because they share the goal of women's empowerment at the local level as well as a commitment to participatory methodologies inspired by the educational perspectives of Paulo Freire. It was a program for women, many of whom were working in specific local contexts with women and women's organizations and women served as facilitators for the training.

During the 1960s and '70s as Freire's ideas became more widely known and the practice of popular education was developed and refined to play a role in social and economic justice struggles throughout Latin America and in many other parts of the world. The development of popular education coincided with an intensification of harsh economic realities generated by a neoliberal economic agenda in which the use of women's' labor played a key role. This coincided with the growth of second wave feminism in Europe and North America. As referred to earlier, women in the Third World interacted with these developments and created their own understandings and critiques of feminism. The overall result was a growing voice of women around the world demanding equal rights. Many of those who were working with women and women's organizations recognized some serious shortcomings in popular education methodology. On one level there was the complaint that popular education methodologies did not articulate the exploitation of women's labor and their central role in the new global economy. One educator described its other shortcomings this way: "Latin American feminists also realized that traditional popular education had failed to address the reality

of women's domestic and community lives: the invisible 'private' sphere and the specific

problems and possibilities of women as workers inside and outside the home" (Nadeau,

1996 p. 43).

Walters and Manicom assert that this combination of forces led to the

development' of feminist popular education'. The goals of feminist popular education

link the educational process or methodology to women's organizing and political

mobilization goals. Feminist popular education strives "to foster both personal and social

empowerment" (Walters & Manicom 1996 p. 7). This recognizes that women's realities

of subordination and inequality in their daily lives must be acknowledged as a part of any

effort for social transformation. It must include a renegotiation of gender relations.

However, gender is understood not narrowly but broadly. "…given that gender is a

social category, referring to historically and culturally defined constructs of masculinity

and femininity, feminist popular education must simultaneously engage with the ways in

which the social categories of race, ethnicity, culture, age, social class, sexuality and

physical ability are implicated in construction of gender" (Walters & Manicom, 1996, p.

7). Feminist popular education is not a 'women only' strategy. Feminist popular

education characterizes the methodologies of popular education this way:

> … it is participatory, democratic, non-hierarchical pedagogy which encourages
> creative thinking that breaks through embedded formats of learning. It valorizes
> this local knowledge, working collectively towards producing knowledge, the
> principle of starting from where people are situated, and working to develop a
> broader understanding of structures and how these can be transformed. (Walters
> & Manicom, 1996, p. 7).

What are the main concepts that define feminist popular education?

Education for Transformation.

Feminist popular educators agree with Freire that the goal of popular education is social transformation, however their understanding of the meaning of social transformation and how educational methodologies play a role for activists for transformation have important women specific elements not found in Freire. It is important to understand for example the perspective of an organization like SPARC (Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres), which was founded in 1984 by middle-class women in India to work with women in poor urban areas. SPARC uses the word empowerment to describe the goals of its educational activities. SPARC's definition of empowerment focuses on two issues: gender discrimination and access to power. "The goals of women's empowerment are to challenge patriarchal ideology, transform structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination, and enable poor women to gain access to power in relation to control of both material and information processes." (Patel, 1996, p. 90)

The Women and Development Unit (WAND) of the University of the West Indies choosing a participatory approach for its organizing for advocacy work articulated the connection between the personal and the political: "Community development begins with self development." (Pat Ellis, 1983). Kate Pritchard Hughes who worked with aboriginal women into Australian contexts echoes a similar perspective on what education can accomplish:

First it can help women understand their oppression systematically so that individual experience and individual understanding are linked to the structures within which they exist. Second it recognizes and acknowledges the connections between power within and outside the classroom….finally you can link women's experiences with that of other oppressed groups and explore the intersections of gender and other axes of identity… (Hughes, 1996, p. 104)

Carolyn Anonuevo who was organizing among Filipino women also reflected on education and identity: "I, therefore consider identity a fundamental concept that can help us to clarify our vision of the transformed society beyond the broad strokes of ideals and hopes. It is a concept that encourages more nuancing leading to questions such as what kind of persons will live in this transformed society. What kinds of relationships will they have with each other? What kind of families will live in it? What roles will women play? How do we ensure the nurturing and sharing of the capabilities of both women and men?" (Medel-Anonuevo, 1996, p. 132-133)

Knowledge.

Like Freire feminist popular educators envision a process of knowledge creation. "Probably the most agreed-upon principle of both popular and feminist education is that of starting from the lives and preoccupations of women themselves." (Walters & Manicom, 1996, p. 12). The starting point includes all of those parts of the "domestic sphere" that in their view are often not valued as a source of knowledge. They go on to point out that this starting point offers its own contradictory dimension because it includes on the one hand validating and celebrating women's everyday experiences and on the other hand being able to challenge the negative gender relationships that affect

women within that daily experience (Walters & Manicom, 1996, p. 14). Astrid Von

Kotze, a South African community educator points out however that this starting point

makes it possible for women themselves to take control of the production of knowledge

and the making the meaning of their own experiences (Von Kotze, 1996, p. 164).

The role of the educator.

Feminist popular educators because they affirm women's daily experiences as the

starting point for the educational process, formulate the role of the educator that

facilitates the achievement of this goal. Anonuevo who developed educational modules

for Filipino women that focused on the telling of women's life stories, concluded that a

key role for the educator was a creating a safe environment in which the women could

share their experiences without fear of ridicule or hostility, an atmosphere in which

women could begin to build a sense of themselves as agents with the capacity to change

their own reality (Medel-Anonuevo, 1996, p. 133).

Patel (1993) and Friedman and Cousins (1996) refer to the dual task of creating

safe space for women and also providing new information that would assist women in

developing critical perspective on their reality. This is a reflection of the feminist

education understanding of the necessity of beginning with women's own experiences

but moving   through analysis to action for transformation.

Educator/learner relationships.

That commitment of feminist popular educators to a permanent critical

perspective on issues of race and class and power informs their understanding of the

problematic involved in the relationship between educators and learners. Von Kotze

asserts the need for the mutuality of that process: "The nature of true dialogue and

democratic interaction is that it is built on the confidence that I, as an educator, will not

abuse the trust invested in me by violating learners' dignity. This is the foundation of

ethical practice. All participants in the creative or educational encounter infuse a sense of

self into the process." (Von Kotze, 1996, p. 160)

On the other hand, the issue of power it is central, but feminist popular educators

understand that unequal power relationships can be present at all levels. Unequal power

can manifest itself in relationships within families, within activist organizations, between

feminists themselves as well as within popular education workshops. In order to deal with

this, issues of identity must constantly be addressed and interrogated, whether it is a

white middle-class identity and the inescapable power relationships that may signify or

poor working-class identities as also a potential site for power. (Medel-Anonuevo, 1996,

p. 131) One Caribbean activist remembers how class and race dynamics affected the

work of the Sistern Theater Collective, for example, in particular the guilt experienced by

white and middle-class black women in working with low income and unemployed black

women workers (Nazombe, 2001).

Oppression.

Critical to the understanding of feminist popular education is the definition of

oppression. Walters and Manicom define it thusly: "broadly speaking the politics of

feminist popular education can be defined as the struggle against gender oppression (Walters & Manicom, 1996, p. 8).

Feminist popular educators have a complex understanding of the meaning of gender oppression: both the nature of that oppression and who are the victims of that oppression. It was mentioned earlier that Walters and Manicom situate the origins of feminist popular education in the 1970's and 80's when there was a serious economic crisis in the developing world. Feminist popular education arose, not out of a generalized feeling of oppression but, like Freire, out of a very specific set of negative economic realities because women felt that while they were bearing a heavy burden for economic change popular education practice was using the experience of men as normative for the description of oppression within the economic crisis. This understanding immediately linked women's oppression and capitalism.

Mendel-Anonuevo asserts that patriarchy is on an equal level as oppression with imperialism and bureaucratic capitalism. Von Kotze, speaking out of the South African experience, adds racism as another dimension of these oppressions. So the oppression of economic crisis was a link directly to women's understanding of their own oppression as invisibility in the context of economic realities as well as their oppression in the context of patriarchy and other culturally centered practices. Oppression, thus described, was not the oppression described by white middle-class European and U.S. women, but it was the oppression described by women in poor communities primarily in the developing world, and echoed by their North American women of color counterparts. (Walters & Manicom, 1993) So for feminist popular educators gender oppression never appears by itself but

oppression is always visible as an intersection of factors of gender, class, culture, and race in the context of community struggles (Patel, 1993).

Another interesting dimension of the feminist popular education understanding of oppression is the insight that oppression has both external and internal dimensions. Recognition that internalized oppression can hold women back from taking transformative action dictated that it must also be dealt with in the educational context. Liberatory pedagogy "…can help women understand their oppression systematically so that individual experience and individuals understanding are linked to the structures within which they exist." (Hughes, 1996, p. 104)

It was interesting to see the role of issues of power, identity and intersection of oppressions in the experience of TFCT women and if it was possible to use knowledge gained from daily experience to build critical analysis.

What constitutes authentic practice of popular education for feminist popular educators? What are the specific tools and methodologies used?

"If…the workshop stimulates the process in which participants interrogate, destabilize and disorganize dominant strategies of power, and suggest …an alternative form of social relations, then these workshops qualify as a feminist activity…." (Von Kotze, 1996, p. 166)

Authentic Practice.

Identity and power.

Of prime importance to feminist popular educators is the link between identity and power - "differences in power, privilege, life conditions and experience, as well as

potential conflicts and antagonism" must be recognized. (Walters & Manicom, 1996, p.18)   Understanding dynamics of power both in the educational context and in the broader society is a key aim of feminist popular education practice. In their view power is central to the workings of societies and also to the dynamics within the classroom. Agreeing with Freire they assert that the activities of the classroom and the design of the educational experience must reflect this analysis. However they are quick to add that the dynamics between the learner and facilitator should always reflect the facilitator's own understanding of her class position and privilege. The identities of the facilitators under ideal circumstances must be inclusive of the diversities present in the educational setting. (Walters. S, 1996)

Feminist popular educators believe that this recognition of the variety of identities and power positions within the educational context make it possible for critical reflection to develop within the group.   The varieties of perspectives represented make it impossible for there to be one "right" answer to the issues under discussion. However feminist popular educators recognize that the power to control the educational environment presents a difficulty for the feminist educator. Kotze describes the problem in these terms:

> …power is not a commodity which can be traded. It is not something owned but rather something exercised in action…When space and opportunities are created for learners to exercise their power as creative beings, as writers or thinkers or people who cope against incredible odds, they take charge and assume of control of the process. (Von Kotze, 1996, p. 160)

However these educators confess that the feminist educator is not immune from the temptation to stick to her predetermined process rather than responding to the creativity and changes that the process itself generates (Walters & Manicom, 1993).

Centrality of women's daily experience.

"Using women's lives as the starting - point allowed us to examine the nuances of women's problems seldom captured in the orthodox macroeconomic and political analyses. The challenge for us was how to relate the lives of women to larger national picture." (Medel-Anonuevo, 1996, p. 121)

In authentic practice women's lives are central, but central for a reason. That reason is as a methodology to bring women to reflect and develop new understanding of their own reality and their connection to broader realities. Once again we see how feminist popular education is directed not simply at individual self-knowledge but self-knowledge in the context of the problems within the broader society.

The difficulty in this process is that it often requires women to be critical of the very cultures and traditions from which they come, especially when it comes to a critique of gender relationships. Friedman and Cousins found that when they wanted to discuss issues of gender some in the group responded negatively to the idea because they felt that gender was a "white woman's issue" and they would be imposing outside values on rural communities and only lead to conflict. (Friedman & Cousins, 1996, p. 65) The paradox of the feminist popular education practitioner is that she can find herself caught between advancing gender goals and maintaining respect for cultural traditions and experience, including ingrained low self-esteem as was the case in the experience of Freeman and Cousins in their work with field workers and researchers in South Africa.

Analytical and practical skills.

"Another vital element in the empowering process is the acquisition of practical skills to enhance women's individual collective autonomy and power." (Patel, 1996, p. 97) The feminist popular educator is not immune to the classic feminist arguments around practical and strategic gender needs. The SPARC experience suggests that while they fully expect changes in gender relationships to be a part of the results of their work they stress that the educational experience women must help women to have some very specific skills that will assist them in gaining the power that they are striving for. (Patel, 1996, p.96)

Building a trusting space.

Another element that it is important to mention in the discussion of authentic practice is they need to create/build a trusting space. In light of their understanding of women's oppression and its impact on women individually, authentic practice must be in the context of a space in which women are to overcome the "silences" that may be ingrained in women as a result of the experience of oppression.

Organizing objective.

Finally in contrast to other kinds of women's consciousness-raising efforts, the feminist popular educator's work is tied to an organizing effort and often organizations. Walters and Manicom believe that it is this connection to ongoing social movements in which the effect can be "cumulative and supportive" (Walters & Manicom, 1993 p. 21). Similarly the connection between the educated women organizers and the low income

women of SPARC was meaningful because the effort was directed at achieving some specific community-based goals.

What methodologies define feminist popular education?

It can be said that the feminist popular educator uses a multiplicity of tools that are generally described as creative and often fun-filled as means for doing critical analysis. The methodologies, at their best, create a provocative process that is spontaneous and highly interactive. The methodologies create an open process where the final outcomes are not totally predictable but where sharing of experiences create new collective knowledge and insights.

Friedman and Cousins (1996) suggest that it is the challenge to the popular educator to discover which media will offer the best opportunity for women's voices. Feminist popular educators often use small group activity methodologies like storytelling, the sharing of life stories, even drawing and creative writing or analysis of the content of media stories can serve this purpose. But also activities like discussion of favorite body parts as an opening for discussion of sexuality or examining household objects as a way to begin to think about subordination can offer opportunities for finding voice (Friedman & Cousins, 1996, p. 33). The SISTERN THEATRE Collective of Jamaica used the experiences of unemployed women to create a drama *Lionheart Girl* which they then presented for themselves and for other women in Jamaica and later around the world. These methodologies might be likened to the codifications used by Freire. The Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA) used participatory research methodologies to work with women in local communities to articulate their realities and

solve problems. The Women and Development unit (WAND) of the extra mural department of the University of the West Indies used Freirean participatory methodologies within local communities to raise awareness and build leadership (Nazombe, 2001).

These shared activities create a sense of home and safety in the educational contexts that encourage surfacing of hidden feelings and perceptions. But also a sense of the reality of power sharing in both the design and decision-making of the educational experience. (Walters & Manicom, p. 16)

What contextual realities necessitate the reinvention strategies?

"If education methodologies are to be effective they must be critically rethought and reframed within their target contexts, taking into account the broad range of factors that enabled and constrain the empowerment of women." (Walters & Manicom p. 6 - 7)

Feminist popular educators contribute an understanding of the complex meaning of the concept of 'context' to the question of reinvention. First of all, of course, they pointed out that in any particular context it is important to understand the specificity of the cultural and social realities of women. Walters and Manicom assert that each context affects women's understanding of their identity, its gender dimensions but also the dimensions of race, class or other identity constructions.

Walters and Manicom draw examples from India, South Africa, and the United States to demonstrate the different ways in which contexts affected the kind of methodologies of popular education used. For example, Bingman in commenting on her

experiences among women in Appalachia, points out how the realities of Appalachia the combination of extreme poverty and a rich cultural tradition helped shape the organizing strategies in that region. In her experience institutions with which she was working, i.e. the community centers reflected the values of democracy and strong organizational leadership that are characteristic of the culture of the region. (Bingman, 1996)

Dunn, a Jamaican sociologist and trainer, reporting on popular education and organizing among women working in export processing zones in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic reflected on the impact of the context of globalization and its connection to organizing women workers. She held that the context created situations of obvious oppression which facilitated their education work. At the same time the cultural context hampered the ability to explore some important gendered expressions of that oppression, for example, the issue of sexual harassment. The task of union organizers and popular educators was complicated by the need to recognize and overcome these roadblocks created by the context (Dunn, 1998).

Dunn suggests that each context requires its own understanding of 'literacy'. Feminist popular educators must address the specific 'literacy' needs in their entire context. In her case she proposed the need for 'organizational literacy'. The methodologies of popular education would need to address and speak to the organizing needs of the women workers. One could even suggest that perhaps there is an "oppression literacy" that needs to be defined very specifically in each context.

US Popular Education Practitioners.

While there are a number of organizations and individuals in the US using

theories of education and practice methodologies built upon or similar to those of Paulo

Freire, because of its longevity and diversity, the work of Myles Horton and the

Highlander Center is the best documented example. This review gave special attention to

the popular education practice in the US at the Highlander Center. Review of others will

be limited to their insights on the particularity of the US context.

Myles Horton and the Highlander Center.

> …Highlander is an idea and a process. It is the idea that people have within
> themselves the potential to solve their own problems through a process of
> realizing that their problems are shared by others, that problems can be solved
> collectively and that their individual problems are not solved until the common
> problem is resolved for everyone. Clearly this entire approach places a premium
> on the concepts of democracy, trust and human dignity. (Conti & Fellenz, 1986, p.
> 16)

The Highlander Education and Research Center is located outside of Knoxville

Tennessee in the heart of the Appalachian region and the southern US. It is difficult, if

not impossible, to separate the work of the Highlander Center from the work of its most

well-known founder Myles Horton. "Although Horton is the first to point out that his

ideas and those of others who have practiced at Highlander have not always been the

same, his approach and what has come to be known as the "Highlander idea" are

practically synonymous." (Peters & Hall, 1986/, p. 35)

To understand something about Myles Horton is a way to understand Highlander

theory and practice. The Highlander Folk School was founded in 1932 in New Market

Tennessee. "The intent was to provide in educational center in the South for the training

of rural and industrial leaders, and for the conservation and enrichment of the indigenous

cultural values of the mountains." (Peters & Hall, 1986/, p.44) Myles Horton served as

its director until the mid- 1980's. Throughout the decades of the 20th century Highlander

drew successive generations of southern and Appalachian activists into educational

activities designed to provide time for analysis of problems and for development of

solutions.

Horton, born in 1905, was raised in the small towns of West Tennessee. The son

of two teachers who later became sharecroppers and farmers, his early associations with

the Cumberland Presbyterian Church taught him the importance of emphasis on good

works in this world. (Peters & Hall, 1986/, p. 36)

Horton was described as "but one of many young [white] southern intellectuals

deeply affected by the political, economic, and social climate of the time." (Peters &

Hall, 1986/, p. 42)   The period of economic boom of the 1920's followed by the Great

Depression, a period which put into sharp relief the contrast between the reality of

people's lives in the time of economic crisis and of the vision of the American dream.

Horton summed up his perspective this way: "Knowing that all great religions judged

nations by how they treated their poor, I accepted that I wanted to work on the side of

society that didn't live by owning. If you're going to have a democracy, that's the kind of

people you build it on." (Peters & Hall, 1986/1989, p. 44) As a college student he

worked one summer in a small village in rural East Tennessee organizing vacation Bible

school. That experience, Horton said, helped him to discover that those he was working

with in this poor community were able to articulate their own problems and look for answers. He learned "that the teachers job was to get them talking about those problems, to raise and sharpen questions, to trust people to come up with the answers." (Peters & Hall, 1986/, p. 39)

Like Freire, Horton was influenced by progressive religious and social thought of his time. After college, Horton spent time in New York City attending Union Theological Seminary and the being influenced by prominent Socialist Marxists theologians like Reinhold Niebuhr and progressive educators like Dewey and Lindeman. He also went to Chicago to study sociology and spent time at Hull House learning from Jane Adams. One other influence that is important to mention is that of the Danish folk school tradition. After his time in New York and Chicago, Horton went to Denmark to study folk schools. It was a tradition that emphasized the importance of the teacher being measured by their capacity to learn.

It is not surprising then that against this backdrop of experiences that the Highlander Folk School was founded by Horton and Don Westin in 1932. The commitment of both Highlander and Horton was from beginning a commitment to the people of the region and the vision of social change (Peters & Hall, 1986/).

What are the main concepts of the Highlander approach to popular education and its points of similarity and differences with the principal concepts of Paulo Freire?

Education for Transformation.

"The power of the Highlander experience is the strength that grows within the souls of the people, working together as they analyze and confirm their own experiences and draw upon their understanding to contribute to fundamental change." (Statement of Highlander's Mission, November 1987)

Educational work at Highlander was based on the premise, borne out of the experiences of the people, that the region of the South and Appalachia was a location of serious injustice on the economic, social and political level. The educational work of Highlander was to help its learners articulate, analyze and understand those injustices in order to be able to act on their own behalf to change those realities. Each decade of Highlander's existence saw a change in emphasis to fit the changing times. Horton called it being able to "read the waters" (Horton, 1983/1987). This meant to be aware of the places in the South where contention was rising, and to understand the dynamics of events and to determine optimal moments for educational interventions with different groups. For example: identifying with labor movement struggles during the 1930's, civil rights struggles in the 1950's and 1960's, reaching out to immigrant groups in the 1990's.

Horton described education as the process of restructuring. In this process more control and responsibility was placed in the hands of the learners for two reasons (1) to democratize the process of education and (2) as the practice of democracy which could be transferred to other areas of their life. The Highlander process sought to encourage the learning environment process as the laboratory for the political processes of the world of the learners. Highlander's concept of education involved the ongoing interaction between

experience, the reflection on/or analysis of experience, commitment to take action, taking action and reflection on that action/experience etc. In Highlander's understanding learning happens when knowledge and meaning are internalized through a process of analysis of experience gained in action, or to use Freire's language: praxis. Highlander's educational goal was to release the potential and energies of the poor, not to solve their problems (Adams, 1971/). So like Freire, Highlander's educational project has been inextricably tied to its political project--social and economic transformation of the South and Appalachia. Education, Horton agreed with other educational philosophers, is a branch of politics (Peters & Bell, 1986/).

Reinhold Niebuhr, Horton's theologian/mentor, writing about Highlander's beginning described Highlander's understanding of education in this way: "to use education as one of the instruments for bringing about a new social order". There were two central foci: (1) achievement of a democratic movement, initially among unions and eventually in society as a whole and (2) leadership training (Peters & Bell, 1986/).

Critical to the Highlander understanding of the role of education was the understanding that this kind of learning requires a collective process. It would be a process that might begin with the understanding of individuals but would grow in strength on the basis of the development of their collective understanding. The group learning experience was the road to collective action which is essential to social change (Peters & Bell, 1986/).

The role of the educator.

"Giving answers is not as a good way of education as asking questions and making people face up and think through things for themselves." (Conti & Fellenz, 1986, p. 12)

Very reminiscent of Freirean practice described earlier, the task of the educator was to stimulate this questioning and analysis of experience by the learners. Horton agreed with the Danish folk school perspective that the teacher must demonstrate his/her own capacity to learn. Horton spoke of this as 'dialogue' and a way to create an environment of equals. An essential responsibility of the teacher is to be able to show a sense of respect for the learners own experiences.

At the same time, like Freire, Horton did not imagine that the teacher is a neutral agent. In his view the teacher brought experience of the social and economic conditions of the region and therefore also had something to share in learning (Kennedy, 1981/). This point, reminiscent of a paradoxical point within the Freire's concept of education, leads to the understanding that the educator must shun the appearance of authority in the teaching and learning situation even while sharing within it. There would appear to be the need for very a delicate balance between the roles of the teacher in the context of the learning environment, at liberty to give of their own perspectives, aware of the power inherent in their role yet seeking to be free of the appearance of authority. Horton contended that the reason why it was important to shun the appearance of authority was because of a belief in democracy in all forms of human enterprise. (Peters & Hall, 1986/)

The concept of democracy is frequently used in Horton's descriptions of educational process, perhaps mirroring the general sentiment of the time, and attitudes of

educators like Dewey and Lindeman. For Horton the practice of education could not be separated from the practice of democracy (Conti & Fellenz, 1986).

Understanding of Oppression.

The term oppression does not appear frequently in Horton's own writing or the writings of those describing Highlander practice. Given the context of racial segregation and low economic status of many inhabitants of the region, Highlander's understanding of the nature of oppression is linked to its belief that the people of Appalachia and the South needed to reclaim their right to be actors in their own political and economic history. In his work first with labor unions, and later with African-Americans during the civil rights era, the use of educational methodology to help people regain economic and political control was a central issue. Horton's basic commitment to democracy meant that in any sphere where people are denied access to the fundamental of democracy – a voice in their own lives – oppression was present.

What principles of practice and what methodologies defined the Highlander practice? How do contextual realities shape the Highlander practice?

"These people — — the poor — and these concepts — brotherhood, democracy, mutuality and united social action—and a region — the South-- limit Highlander's methods" (Adams, 1971/, p. 66)

Authentic Practice

Highlander Axiom: "learn from the people and start education where they are" (Adams, 1971/, p. 65)

Highlander's understanding was that workshop participants bring their curriculum with them and their life experiences must be the starting point for educational process not the perceptions of the Highlander's staff (Adams, 1971/). As was noted in the discussion of feminist popular educators, the experience and knowledge of learners is the single most important ingredient in the learning environment. However while accounts of Highlander's work detail the diversity of learners – poor and working class whites, African Americans and more recently Spanish speaking immigrants – and the efforts to build bridges across these diversities, there is little direct comment on the role of women in these workshops or the role played by gender differences in these workshops although women played a substantial role in the history of Highlander (Nazombe, 2002). Another mark of authentic practice is the ability of Highlander facilitators to listen to the perceptions of their workshop participants and to make listening to one another a core element of the workshop environment. In light of the historic divisions of race and class within their context this was crucial.

Methodological tools

Several tools clearly marked Highlander's practice: the residential workshop, the use of culture, the importance of documentation, and a commitment to follow-up and ongoing networking.

Highlander's ability to provide a chance for diverse people in the region to interact and break existing patterns in a safe environment is key to its educational methodology. The residential workshop is the place where Highlander puts its principles

into practice. At the Center, workshop participants experienced a communal life that

was, very likely, totally different from their home environment. It was a place where

different races and economic levels were forced, in gentle way, to interact because of

eating and sleeping in the same place. Highlander became a place where it was

acceptable to do what was unacceptable in other places. 'Togetherness', said Horton 'is

important'. "We discovered that life at Highlander could also provide an opportunity for

practicing in demonstrating our principles, if they were incorporated in the structure of

Highlander, in our personal behavior and relationships." (Horton, 1983/, p. 19)

Democracy and brotherhood, they believed, could best be learned experientially. The

workshops themselves were designed in a very particular way. The goal was to create a

learning circle environment that would break the hierarchical pattern of knowledge

transmission that most participants were familiar with. Clark has suggested that the main

theme of each Highlander workshop was "for every act of oppression against people

there is an equal reaction which can be used positively to fight oppression" (Clark, 1978,

p. 46). In order to give students and opportunity to reflect and analyze their own

experiences they were given responsibility for the daily operation of the workshop,

articulating their own realities, naming the similarities of problems in different

communities. "The moment a group senses the power of its collective knowledge, it

becomes possible for the workshop discussion leader to raise the questions of a social

movement." (Adams, 1971/, p. 73). Questions were the teacher's tool to stimulate self-

examination by students as well as to question the nature of social systems to be changed.

This process of questioning led the learners to a place where they could challenge their

own assumptions about the social system, a similar process to Freire's idea of the development of critical consciousness (Peters & Bell, 1986/).

Another tool was building respect. In order to do this it was very important that experts not be allowed to dominate the discussion. The Highlander practice was to invite an expert in when a specific piece of information was needed. Once that information was given the expert was asked to leave. The workshops therefore were also vigorously "non academic". Myles Horton said, "The reason workshops that Highlander work is that you have to trust people, you have to love people, you have to care for the people...how the people learn is a miracle...I have not been concerned with how far but rather in what direction." (Conti & Fellenz, 1986/, p. 29) Moving from the individual to a group learning process was not just a convenient strategy but an embodiment of the basic educational understandings and political understandings of Highlander: "You don't believe in the free enterprise system and individual competitiveness, so you practice group processes. You practice people learning by groups. You tell people they can solve their problems by group, so your philosophy is expressing itself in the way you deal with problems." (Kennedy, 1981/, p. 8)

Another methodological tool was documentation of the workshop discussion. It was used as a means to demonstrate the respect that the Highlander staff had for the knowledge of the participants. If the knowledge is valuable it is worth writing down and keeping. This record also served the process. Documentation helps to turn reports of individual experience into collective insights. The search for solutions becomes a group rather than an individual process.

The affirmation of culture is both a fundamental understanding in all Highlander's educational work and tool of that educational process. Horton believed that the cultural could serve the intellectual. Affirmation of the culture of the region was one way to build and to reaffirm respect for people's knowledge and creativity. Cultural workers, musicians and poets, always have been an integral part of the life of Highlander. Cultural sharing in informal settings has always been an important part of building an understanding across lines of race and class. In addition individual experiences are integrated into the students' collective process by using cultural tools like improvisational drama, songwriting and singing.

For Highlander, as for Freire, the learning process is not complete if it does not involve action. Therefore the next important part of the Highlander praxis had to do with follow-up. At the end of each workshop participants were asked to make a public commitment to carry their learning back to their home communities (Kennedy, 1981/, p. ii). In order to support this Highlander has an ongoing system of follow-up visits and phone calls after workshop by their own staff. This creates a structural possibility for ongoing involvement with participants and the creation of resource networks to continually nurture them, as well as ongoing learning.

What Contextual Realities Necessitate Reinvention Strategies?

Highlander's deep commitment to understanding its constituency represents a valuable insight for evaluating other popular education efforts like Training for Community Transformation. Faithfulness to its context has been a centering element for Highlanders work. Highlander has been able to respond to the changing times and

realities of its geographic location and its primary constituency of poor people, by

reinventing itself from decade to decade.

Because Highlander sees itself as an educational center in the context of a

particular geographic reality, the issues of methodology and context are therefore

absolutely interconnected.

Highlander has always been clear about its constituency. Students came to Highlander

from a disadvantaged position within the larger society but they brought something very

important with them. "No adult comes to Highlander for a workshop unless he or she is

active in his or her community or appears to be emerging as a leader among poor

people." (Adams, 1971/, p. 68) Highlander's constituency was already activist.

While poverty was one of the distinguishing characteristics of the constituency

served by Highlander, the other critical characteristic was race. Participants in

Highlander's workshops were deliberately drawn from across lines of race. The goal of

Highlander was to challenge the existing racial realities of the south. "In the South, once

you've eaten together, it's almost like being married. You've broken the code, you've

had your toe in the water….We don't want to talk about it, so nobody wants to talk. We

just keep on doing it." (Kennedy, 1981/, p. 6).

Other Perspectives on the US Context

Peter McLaren and Henry Giroux.

> Despite a convoluted and frequently opaque writing style, Freire (1974) was
> widely read, not only in academia, but more importantly in the barrios and inner
> cities where activists, "grassroots" adult educators began to adapt this "pedagogy
> of the oppressed" to urban North America. Throughout the United States and
> Canada hundreds of "Freirean" adult education centers opened in storefronts,

churches, neighborhood organizations, and community colleges. The principal
challenge in each instance was the adaptation of pedagogical forms developed in
the cauldron of revolutionary change -- -- nations where political will was
accompanied by public policy supported the people's initiative -- -- to the
functionalist domain of capitalism and parliamentary democracy. (Heaney, 1987,
p.15)

For the purpose of this review it was useful to look briefly at some of these

educators and their diverse perspectives on the applicability of Freire in the US.

Peter McLaren and Henry Giroux are two critical education theorists who have written

extensively about Freire from within academia. They are white men, one Canadian

(McLaren) and one U.S. (Giroux). Their first answer to the question of applicability is in

the affirmative. "Freire's insights have been critical in helping North American

criticalists recognize that mainstream pedagogical efforts most often seen in their

"democratic schools" are closely tethered to liberal-capitalist social order to a social

contract that reproduces inequality…." (McLaren, 2000, p.9). McLaren sees Freire as

important because U.S. education is a servant of an economy "designed to create cyber

citizens within a democracy of fast-moving images, representation and lifestyle choices."

(McLaren, 2000, p. 16) This view holds that Freire's perspective helps the critical

educator to understand the grip that capitalism has in the US. The Freirean lens assists in

the 'reading of the world' in North America.

Giroux warns however that educators and students in the US are living in the

reality of US hegemony which fosters a "colonizing gaze' and so it is difficult to read the

world from a self-critical political perspective while under the influence of that world

view (Giroux, 1993, p.9).

McLaren and Giroux offer some important differences and correctives to Freire's view of oppression. McLaren, perhaps offering a perspective from the racial and economic majority, believes that domination and oppression are less overt in the U.S. than they are in the Third World. North American society he contends is less obviously structured by the division based upon the conflict of labor and capital. North America also does not live with the structures of terror as in the Third World and therefore collective action doesn't seem necessary within a climate of political and cultural pluralism (McLaren, 2000, p. 20).

Of special significance to McLaren is the reality of the intersection between race and privilege in the United States. He believes that Freire's failure to systematically analyze racism and sexism is a serious problem especially because it means that there is the failure to engage the reality of white male privilege. He believes that Freire discounts the significance of patriarchy entirely. He contends that Freire's literacy method involves a male bias. (McLaren, 2000)

Giroux echoes this sentiment, raising sharply the problem of the application of Freire in the United States because of Freire's limited way of equating emancipation with class struggle and therefore failing to realize that women are subjected to unseen patriarchy.

Giroux also warns that there is a danger that Third World intellectuals like Freire will be taken up by first world intellectuals without any reference to their own situation

of privilege or to the sharpness of Freire's political critique that is an important part of

this understanding.

Thomas Heaney

Thomas Heaney is a white male academic with experience as a popular educator

at the community level.   He is an associate professor of adult education at National-

Louis University. He was an associate and co-founder of the Lindeman Center for

Community Empowerment through Education, a Chicago-based organization which

developed education and research projects with low income and oppressed groups related

to local efforts to change conditions in neighborhoods, the city, and beyond.

He was among the founding members of the North American Alliance for Popular

and Adult Education (NAAPAE) and a former vice-president of the International Council

for Adult Education. His writings about Freirean practice began in the 1980's (National

Louis University, n.d.)

Heaney asserts that there are several things that are particularly appealing to

educators working at the community level about the theoretical and methodological

propositions of Paulo Freire. First of all he believes that Freire's challenge of the

'neutrality of the technological model of schools' resonated with the activists own

critique of the US school system. They believed schools were not neutral actors within

U.S. society but promoted the creation of a work force to serve the technological model

of society. These educators supported Freire's claim that "any curriculum which ignores

racism, sexism, the exploitation of workers, and other forms of oppression at the same

time supports the status quo. It inhibits the expansion of consciousness and blocks

creative and liberating social action for change." (Heaney, 1987, p. 1) Also those from

the community pointed to Freire's belief that the poor and the dispossessed can use their

collective strength to make social change and create a collective mission. Many of these

activist educators were committed to using the process of dialogue which affirmed

mutual and co-equal roles between teachers and learners. Adult educators affirmed

methods which reflected on the political content of the daily experience of their learners

and used people's knowledge as the basis for curriculum. Freire's methods, Heaney says,

provided the practical tools for these community activists to reconstruct urban adult

education (Heaney, 1987).

Reflecting on the experiences of these activist/ educators in the U.S. during the

1970s, Heaney draws attention to several obstacles to the success of their efforts. He

discusses two kinds of problems. First of all, he believes that the conditions under which

Freire's theories were formulated are not present in the US.   This makes the linking of

learning to action for revolutionary change in the US very difficult.   A second

fundamental problem identified by Heaney is his belief that "social change is

inconceivable in a classless society and that that the illusion of classlessness in the United

States serves as the most formidable obstacle to social change". (Heaney, 1987, p.17)

He concludes from this: "As a result, Freirean programs in this country have 'raised

consciousness' but seldom directly influence social change. Their revolutionary bark has

clearly been more fearsome than their bite. The mechanisms for social change, the two-

party system etc., militated against the kind of transformational change envisioned by

Freirean education strategies. (Heaney, 1987 p. 3)   He reminds his readers of Freire's

own reflection on this subject with regard to his work in Guinea Bissau: "where the conditions for change did not exist, the possibility of failure accompanies that literacy struggle from the beginning" (Freire, 1978, page 113).

As an example of this reality of the lack of a revolutionary transitional, chaotic context to nurture education efforts, Heaney reflects on the experiences of groups during the 1970s that learned that the cost of survival within the U.S. was very high and that accepting government funding often meant to sacrifice of collective empowerment and community strategies for individual growth. He calls attention to be danger of crafting a "sanitized, depoliticized Freirean approach" as a means to win the struggle for funding. (Heaney, 1987, p. 5)

On a more optimistic concluding note, Heaney points to the small number of organizations and institutions that have sought work at the margins remaining faithful to the Freirean vision and "…await the revolution and attempt to prepare learners for political options not yet available." (Heaney, 1987, p. 5)

Blanca Facundo

One of the community educators/activists of the 1970's who has commented on the applicability of Freire in the US is Blanca Facundo. Facundo, a Puerto Rican woman educator, who describes herself as being from a working class background, was a part of a network of Latino adult education projects IRCEL - Information and Resources Center for *Educacion Liberadora* that operated between the late 70's and the early 1980's. The

network was interested in social change - "to work with the oppressed" and they created a

non-profit organization that received government funding during the height of the era of

the War on Poverty to pursue some of the social transformation goals inspired by Freire

at the grassroots level in urban and rural areas where Latinos were concentrated. Their

work was primarily outside the formal school setting and covered a wide spectrum of

adult education activities ranging from Spanish and English literacy, to GED preparation,

use of theater and parenting. (Facundo, 1984). Describing their attitude toward the

applicability of Freire, Facundo says:

> We were not in search of a literacy technique, but of a total overhaul, both in process and contents of adult education in the United States. Our stand was that as long as there is oppression in the United States, Freire would be relevant at least at the theoretical level, but that practices for the United States had to be discovered in the United States based upon the realities of a complex, technologically advanced industrial society that no one had succeeded in explaining.

So the need for reinvention was central to their thinking. Their goal was

not only to do adult education but to transform the relationship of educational institutions

to community problems and community people (Facundo, 1984).

For the purposes of this research there are two specific aspects of Facundo's

reflection on her work that are particularly interesting: one theoretical: the proposition of

a Third World within the US that mirrored Freire's Brazil, and one practical: the

necessity of receiving financial support from the system that was to be dismantled. It was

perhaps the connection between these two aspects that combined to generate Facundo's

ultimate views about the applicability of Freire in the US and the potential for success of liberatory education.

On the proposition that the reality of Latinos in the US could be compared to the Third World the experience of Facundo's group was discouraging: "We did not fully realize that, even if in fact there is a Third World within the United States, its conditions would be very different from those of the Third World out of the United States." (Facundo, 1984)

Facundo admits that the Latino/liberatory educators realized that they were operating in a hostile environment but were inspired by Freirean optimism to believe that they needed to try to make a difference. They also did not have a facile understanding of what it meant to be "third world" within the US and accepted, she says, the understanding of poverty in the US as "subsidized" when compared to the Third World. For example, in a majority of cases government support programs for the poor are non-existent in the Third World. But her reflections imply is that particular aspects of being the "third world" in the US were a source of the failure of IRCEL to survive and meet its goals. She reported, for example, meeting with racism and disrespect in settings where they sought to share their experiences with others, often white academics, working and theorizing about liberatory education. Because they held the view that in the US it was not possible to accomplish the kind of transformation they desired alone, these rebuffs by other 'liberatory educators' would have been particularly discouraging (Facundo, 1984).

The other issue that Facundo discusses at length is funding support. She speaks repeatedly of the limited resources of the liberatory education projects. She described the

bold way in which the network requested funds from the federal government to support a

search for alternatives: "let us try something different, because the educational system

has failed. We do not know if it will work but, do you have a better idea?" (Facundo,

1984, p.31) In contrast, she confesses that this funding often required compromises or

equivocations about the ultimate goals of the activities, even in such areas as emphasis on

the quantity of persons served rather than the quality of the service and individual growth

over collective empowerment and community agendas for action. (Heaney, 1987, p. 1)

As another dimension of Shor's insight about the view that it was necessary to work

within the system, Facundo's experience makes it clear that there is a high price to be

paid for survival when working within the system.

> In the end Facundo is critical of the efforts to bring Freire philosophy and
> methodologies into the US context.
>
> I conclude that our uncritical adoption of Freire' s educational philosophy and the
> disparate ways in which it was uncritically mixed with transformational ideas and
> practices, U.S. style, was a serious error for which we are to blame. The United
> States context is simply too different from that in which Freire developed his
> ideas, and we have not really tried to explore the differences. It was easier to
> assume that the Third World was the same in any country. (Facundo 1984, p.59)

Canadian Popular Educators

"I want to see ordinary people feeling their own worth and seeing the same worth in other

people. This cannot be done from the top down, but only by ordinary people imbued

with their own power." *Doris Marshall*, (activist founder of the Doris Marshall Institute

for Education and Action)

Within North America another influential group of popular educators were and still are based in Canada. The height of their activity was between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s. Their theory and experience are important to this research project for two reasons: 1. they named Paulo Freire's theory and practice as a key source of their work; 2. their practice has some similarity to the Grail effort which is researched here. They were involved as popular educators in conducting workshops (including training of trainers) for interested persons across a wide range of issues but always focused on social transformation.

Many of these educators came to political formation through exposure to an involvement with Latin and Central American political struggles in the 1970s, and solidarity work with the South African liberation struggle. They represented an interesting diversity in terms of country of origin and interest. Although they were largely middle-class and educated up to the university level, they've included a diverse set of perspectives. Some were born and raised in Latin America, some worked in Latin America and some were associated and had their origins in the Caribbean and in the Philippines in particular. Many were based in Toronto. They were involved in union organizing, grass-roots groups working on a variety of issues and antiracist work. In Toronto there were three organizations that are perhaps representative of this group of educators. The Doris Marshall Institute was a nonprofit group, founded in 1987, that conducted workshops and provided consulting services for wide variety of social and economic justice groups. The Jesuit Centre for Social Faith and Justice also was

involved in creating spaces for political dialogue for action, developing a popular

education conjunctural analysis process known as 'Naming the Moment'. (Barndt, 1989)

A third group, known as GATT Fly, was a product of the ecumenical church

movement and was engaged in popular education work with local groups around Canada.

A review of the work of these groups shows that the persons involved moved from group

to group and were influential and interacting with each other and so they represent not

three distinct ways for doing popular education, although they have their differences, but

can be looked at as a group. This was a transformational approach to education which

can be summarized: "such education seeks to transform power relations in society,

relations between teacher and learners, and relations among learners." (Arnold, Burke,

James, Martin, & Thomas 1991, p. 22).

What main concepts defined the theory about popular education?

Role of education

The essence of these Canadian popular educators understanding of the role of

education is rooted in their basic conviction that the economic and social and political

realities of Canada required transformation. Their work was, and continues to be,

essentially a political project. "Education for social change… signifies that approach to

education that is in the interests of oppressed groups. We involve people in the process

of critical analysis so they can, potentially; act collectively to change oppressive

structures. This process is participatory, creative, and empowering." (Arnold et. al,

1991, p. 5) In their own context they echo Freire's call for social transformation. In their

view the task of education is mutual and collaborative rather than education <u>of</u> or <u>for</u>

someone else led by the educator.   These activist/ educators saw themselves engaged in a process in which their own stake in the future of social transformation was very important. Their goal was to transform power relationships in their country. They wanted to be engaged in an educational process that would be inclusive.   "Our goal here is not to assert the primacy of a particular political "line" within education. Rather we're proposing that political identity is integral to be critical and self-critical reflection of activist educators. Once we have established our basic critical self-knowledge…we are ready to assess the educational situations that all of us face." (Arnold, et. al. 1991, p. 23)

Role of the educator

These Canadian popular educators named two steps of initial importance. One was locating themselves. They affirmed the necessity of beginning the work of education with a self-conscious understanding of their own identities: the positionality of race and class, power relationships based upon social identity, organizational identity and educational identity etc. This problematizing of their role was not a onetime task but an ongoing part of the responsibility of the educator. "…educators have to recognize the political side of their involvement in social change education. Either we understand our privilege and continue to exploit it; or we understand our privilege and create working conditions that both remove the blinders of privilege and refuse to collapse into privilege." (Arnold, 1991, et. al., p.157)

With this as an ongoing part of the work of the educator then they propose that the educator embark upon the second initial task: that of assessing the situation around them. This involved a collective process with learners of building a picture of reality and

developing a critical perspective on that picture, even challenging the "given" in perceptions of reality. These represent refinement and reinventions of Freirean strategy.

Relationship of educators and learners

These educators name the means by which the process of education goes forward as democratic practice. This "…means that in all our activities we try to act in a way that is conclusive and maximizing participation in defining goals and activity." (Arnold, et.al., 1991, p. 6)

Part of the process suggested is the interaction of these two tasks of inclusiveness and maximized participation. Learners also begin to voice their own identities and to understand how those identities effect their perceptions of reality. At least on a theoretical level this sensitivity to issues of identity and the power relationships inherent in them enhances the possibility of what Freire envisioned of equality between educators and learners because it seeks to acknowledge a variety of kinds of power hierarchies and their role while at the same time not being captive to existing hierarchies. Educators have to be willing to let go of control of the educational setting and be "honest, open and vulnerable" (Arnold, et. al. 1991, p.162). They assert that: "When everyone takes responsibility for learning, everyone teaches" (Arnold, et.al., 1991, p. 66).

Oppression.

Seen from this perspective education is a part of the process of a political and social transformation in Canada, the issue of power is at the heart of their understanding of oppression in their context. While there are many different kinds of social problems, this view is that access to power or lack of power whether its political, economic or social

power is the central issue. They argue that whether they're talking with rank-and-file

union members, or immigrant workers, or First Nation's communities, a central issue is

that of unequal power relationships. Because a feminist critical perspective also informs

their educational work they seek to be sensitive to unequal power relationships as

both an external issue to the groups involved and an internal issue within the workshop

group or organizations, and within personal relationships. Race, class, and gender in

their multiple combinations must be key elements of the dialogue. (C. Cavanaugh,

personal communication, November 2006)

What principles of practice and methodologies defined popular education

practice?
Authentic practice.

… education for social change is engaged politically. This is Praxis, or theory in
action. Those of us engaged in this praxis, whether in community groups,
educational institutions, or broad-based social movements, must reflect daily on
the strategy. Our educational work must be located not so we can shape the grand
sweep of history, but so we can exercise our right and obligation to an educated
guess about the social impact of the learning we promote. (Arnold, et.al., 1991, p.
3)

The authors of *Educating for a Change* suggest the use of a basic spiral for

learning that is their version of the dialectical and dialogical process proposed by Freire.

A spiral is their graphic portrayal of praxis process of reflection, action, reflection, action

that is ongoing. They propose five repeating steps in a spiral: 1.starting with the

experience of the participants; 2. looking for patterns; 3. adding new information and

theory; 4. practice skills strategy-plan for action; and 5. apply in action (Arnold, et. al.

1991).

Since 1991 the learning spiral has had some interesting additions overtime which reflect learning through practice. In the fall of 2000, the Catalyst Centre proposed the addition 'democratic communication' as a new element to be included in each of step of the spiral. The effort was to get popular educators to think again about the meaning of internal communications of that foster equality to think about how to embody these understandings in their popular education processes. (Gorecki, 2001) The most recent version of the spiral which appears in this book has placed in the center and radiating to each of the steps the phrase "challenge power relationships". This would seem to reflect an understanding that at all points in the dialogue power relationships are present and they must be interrogated whether they are internal power relationships within the group having the discussion or there they are the external power relationships that they seek to change. (Burke, 2002) It was interesting to observe how the democratic communication and the interrogation of internal/external power relationships play a role in the experiences of TFCT women.

Methodologies.

Emerging out of the work of these educators were two other methodologies that are worth comment because they have been influential in the U.S. as well as in Canada. In the 1980s the Jesuit Center developed a workshop process known as Naming the Moment. The Naming the Moment's educational workshop was based upon Freire's fundamental understanding of the need for structural analysis with an addition of the notion of conjunctural analysis which came out of the writing's of the Italian Marxist Anthony Gramsci and had also been a part of Latin American popular education practice.

The methodology was to help groups look at a particular moment in time and understand the power dynamics within that moment, both their own, and those that they would need to oppose them to be able to use that analysis for strategic action planning. The process includes the possibility of using all of the popular education tools of a dialogue process including: dramas, role plays, timelines, graphic representations etc.   The learning spiral referred to in *Educating for a Change* is basically drawn from the Naming the Moment process (Barndt, 1989).

The other methodology is known as the Ah Ha! Process and was developed by GATT Fly. Taking as its starting point the idea of listening to the community, the Ah Ha! Process provides an opportunity for learners to share, in picture form, their key concerns about their reality, and then to build an analysis of that reality when all of those concerns are pictured simultaneously on one large sheet of paper or board. It makes possible a way to see the interconnections between different kinds of oppressions and experience. It is in fact the kind of participatory creation of a giant Freirean codification. The special contribution of the Ah Hah process is it helps workshop participants see and name their connection to each other and to global realities (GATT-Fly, 1983).

What contextual realities reinvention strategies?

Deborah Barndt is an educator/ activist who was involved from the 1970s in popular education and the development of the Naming the Moment process. Although speaking specifically about Freirean codes, her comments summarize three ways in which Canadian popular educators moved beyond the parameters of Freire during the 1990s and beyond. She points first to participatory production. The development of the

picture of reality that is so important for the process of dialogue that Freire envisioned is

no longer left up only to academics and social scientists and artists, all participants in the

process are encouraged to share their knowledge. It is learners producing their own

learning materials. (Barndt, 1998)

Secondly, in light of the diversity of the context in which they were working, a

new challenge had to be faced: how to create generative themes that reflect common

concerns when the people you are working with represent "diverse cultural histories,

languages, epistemologies and practices". This diversity needed to result in codes more

reflective of the fragmentation and alienation present in the society. "It is a new

challenge to find the common ground and to recover and nurture connections, no matter

how tenuous." (Barndt, 1998 p.70).

In a time when identity politics play a central role in movements for social

transformation, she suggests that it is important that we look to the methodologies and

understand representation: "who represents whom, how and for what?' The processes of

popular education must make an effort "to acknowledge (and make more transparent) the

location and perspectives of the presenter." She believes that the politics of identity have

trained current popular educators to "consider the (albeit ever shifting and changing)

configurations of power that are embedded in any relationship including teacher –

students, code – maker and decoder." (Barndt, 1998, p.71)

The one other thing that is clear from a review of the work of these educators was

that in their context the need to not only understand differences but to build alliances

across those differences was fundamental to the political project that they sought to

undertake. Freire's description of the context in Brazil appears to have been much simpler picture. The Canadian reality might be more aptly described by the concept of 'scattered hegemonies' (Grewal and Kaplan 1994/2002). Power relationships are very complex, with different groups holding different kinds of power at different times.

Canadian educators have commented upon the very special character of Canada itself that affected the ability to do your education work. In contrast to their U.S. counterparts, at least during periods of a liberal to progressive political climate, these educators were able to find support for their activities from both the government and the nongovernmental sectors with seemingly less strictures on how those funds might be used (C. Cavanaugh, personal communication, November 2006). These Canadian realities are in sharp contrast to the funding realities described earlier by US popular education practitioners Heaney and Facundo and add to the picture of the difficulty of applicability of Freirean methodologies in the US context.

Summary of the Literature Review

The review of theory and practice of popular education through the eyes of Paulo Freire and other educators and practitioners revealed much about the similarity in their perspectives as well as the ways in which their identities and location shape different understanding of this educational theory and its practice.

Tables 1, 2 and 3 summarize the key ideas of each person and group. Table 1 compares the main concepts that define Freirean educational theory as articulated Freire and the educators and theorists who followed in his footsteps.

Table 1. What main components define Freirean educational theory?

Concepts	Freire	Shor and Darder	Weiler and hooks	Feminist Popular Educators	Horton	Canadians
Education for Transformation	Transformation as the human task, history as possibility	Total overhaul needed, schools as sites of struggle	Women as subjects and objects of history, situated pedagogy	Personal, social and structural transformation	Personal and collective as starting point for society change	Contribution to the political task of transforming power relationships
Knowledge Creation	Lived experience as starting point, ability for critical consciousness	Affirm the experience of the oppressed	Importance of lived experience and development of critical consciousness	Affirm women's domestic, everyday knowledge for building critical analysis	Recognizing experience of the people	Learners knowledge as the starting point
Role and Task of the Educator	Education as a political task, necessity of class suicide	Inspired to make a difference, identity driven	Role of gender in educational contexts	Acknowledgement of Identity, difference and privilege	Asking questions, dialogue, demonstrating democracy	Locating own identity and problematizing role
Teacher/Learner Relationships	Dialogue	Problem-posing	Recognizing power differences in order to dismantle them	Sensitive to issues of power	Equality, hierarchy broken	Inclusive, maximizing participation in goal definition, picturing reality
Oppression	Class oligarchy, capitalism, globalization, neo-colonialism, oppressors and oppressed	Economic Systems, capitalism, class, ethnicity	Patriarchy, race, plurality of women and experiences of oppression	Patriarchy, gender central dimension of power, intersection of identities and oppressions	Poverty, race, class, lack of political, economic and social power	Unequal power relationships- race, class, gender etc. as central to oppression

Education for transformation.

All of those included in this review are in agreement that the ultimate goal of the

education that they promote is transformation. Their individual positionality determines

what that transformation is to be about and for whom. For most of them that

transformation has a political character. They carry a vision of political change within

societies, and overturning of existing power relationships. While Canadians and Freire

himself see that transformation clearly in sharply political terms, feminist popular

educators and critical theorists place women at the center of their transformation

strategies. The location of transformation also varies according to positionality of the educator. Those operating from academia see the possibilities of transformation through the official structures of education like schools and universities, while others think of economic and political structures.

Knowledge creation.

Another point of strong agreement between all those reviewed is that the educational process that they propose will affirm the knowledge and experience of the learners and use it to build analysis and strategies for change. Those learners might be women, racial minorities or those in poverty or combination of all three, but the educational strategies place their knowledge at the center. The importance of this redefining of knowledge and knowledge creation cannot be underestimated.

Role of the teacher.

Freire asserted that it is important for the educator to be self-aware. The educators and practitioners following in his footsteps have developed this concept beyond its reflection in Freire's own writing. For most, understanding of identity is the first critical task of the educator. Once again their own positionality has provided a variety of lenses from which to look at the question of identity. Freire's own starting point was class but his followers have added gender, race, power and privilege to the complexities that an educator must understand in order to problematize their own role and also gain perspective on the relationship to learners.

Teacher learner relationships.

For all of these educators learning is a mutual and collective affair with striving for equality as a primary task. When carried out to its fullest extent the roles of educator and learners shift from person-to-person in the context of the learning process of the group. It is in this mutual learning process, that Freire called dialogue, that critical consciousness of reality is developed.

Oppression.

Popular education theorists and practitioners have a variety of definitions for oppression. But for all of them identification of oppression is a part of the necessary task of education for transformation. Freire himself began by naming oppression in terms of class oligarchy. Others have named patriarchy, race, poverty, lack of political economic and social power, capitalism and other forms of economic organization. When Freire first spoke of oppression he used the binary categories – the oppressor and the oppressed. Those who have worked to redefine and expand Freire's theories have recognized the inherent limitation in this binary articulation. They have proposed instead to look at the interconnections between various forms of oppression as articulated by those who experience them. For example the connections between poverty and race, or lack of economic and social power and gender.

Table 2 -What Principles and Practices Define Popular Education Practice?

Concepts	Freire	Shor and Darder	Weiler and hooks	Feminist Popular Educators	Horton	Canadians
Authentic Practice	Methodology consistent with theory, educator as learner, learner as educator, conscientization	Liberating education	Learners as theorists of their own lives, sharing experience, feeling as fundamental, difference as a central category	Deconstructing and constructing gender and other identities in domestic realities, creation of safe spaces	Starting with people, listening	Praxis: Regular reflection on political impact of educational engagement, democratic communication
Methodologies	Dialogue, reading the world, generative themes, codifications, praxis		Engaged, situated pedagogy – risk taking, mutual help	Listening, sharing knowledge, participatory methodology, spontaneous creation, storytelling, small groups, collective problem solving	Praxis, residential workshops, culture, documentation, follow up – ongoing action, minimize the role of experts	Naming the moment, *conjunctural* analysis, structural analysis

Authentic practice.

Because the knowledge of learners is the basic raw material for the educational

experience, authentic practice is identified as practices that use that experience as the

basic building block. But the sharing of experiences of other learners within the context

of the learning environment must make it possible for learners to construct and

deconstruct their own experience and identities in the process. There cannot be a

learning that begins outside of the context of the experience other learners. For almost all

of those in this review another mark of authentic practice involves political analysis

broadly defined.

Methodologies.

A variety of methodologies are proposed by these educators. All of the methodologies propose a personal engagement of both learners and educators. Freire's metaphor about literacy continues to be helpful for understanding how a variety of tools – storytelling, role plays and small group work – contribute to the process for naming of reality that is necessary in education for transformation.   Reflection and action in dialectical relationship are affirmed as indispensable.

Table 3 -What Contextual Realities Necessitate Reinvention Strategies?

Concepts	Freire	Shor and Darder	Weiler and hooks	Feminist Popular Educators	Horton	Other US Voices	Canadians
National Political Realities	Presence or lack of conditions for openness to revolutionary change	Inequality as normative, lack of readiness of working class to trust liberatory pedagogy, culture of silence	Recognition of the power of the legacy of history to shape perspective	Culture, race, gender, age issues imbedded in the social context Globalization and fundamentalism	Need to overcome pervasive sense of low self esteem	Capitalism ethos, male/white power, financial vulnerabilities, oppression less obvious, illusion of classless society	Shifting political climate assists and hinders educational work
Gender realities			Power of patriarchy in education and society, simultaneous location as oppressed and oppressor	Culture definitions of gender identity must be transcended			
Difference Diversity		Negotiating multiple and conflicting Identities	Need to overcome the generic category of 'woman'	Race and other historic power divisions must be uncovered	Creating spaces for the deliberate breaking down of barriers	Failure to recognize difference between US and third world cultural and political pluralism	Diverse population multiples difficulty/necessity of naming shared values and strategies

Political, social and economic realities.

The educators reviewed here named a variety of contextual obstacles that would affect the use of popular education strategies. It may be practical realities like struggle for financial support for the education enterprise. Feminists pointed to the ways in which ingrained gender roles inhibit women's ability to believe in the possibility of their own participation in social change, a perspective echoed by Horton when dealing with low income persons in the south of United States and Shor in dealing with working class students. Some of these barriers are in the very psyche of a society and have produced coping mechanisms that close learners to believing in a liberatory education process. As noted earlier Freire himself, reflecting on his experience in Guinea Bissau, believed that a certain mix of revolutionary conditions must be present in order for the education for transformation process to be successful. The presence of educators committed to education for transformation may not be enough.

Gender realities.

 Feminist popular educators and critical theorists have proposed that in light of the complexity of women's identities and experiences of multiple forms of oppression educational methodologies must seek to assist women to develop ways to transcend those contextual restrictions.

Diversity and difference.

Finally the educators reviewed here call for maximizing recognition of all kinds of differences and the role of the intersection of those differences in the educational process and in the social realities that groups are seeking to transform. They name the

contradictory realities in which a person can be both oppressor and oppressed simultaneously, making it impossible to use universal immutable categories to describe any reality. Their testimony shows the different ways in which these complexities are manifest in each reality.

The record of the individuals and organizations reviewed here provided a helpful background for the present study. Together they presented a complex picture of the theory and methodology that has been identified with Paulo Freire and popular education. When viewed in total we see that some have focused their attention on description of the methodologies used and research of those methodologies. Also the outcomes of the use of those methodologies have been seen through the eyes of the educators. Reports give less systematic attention to the voices of learners. The present research looked primarily at the Training for Community Transformation Program through the voices and perspectives of the learners as a result of their post-training experiences. When the learners' experiences are more clearly understood it can be possible to comment on the applicability of Freirean theory and method as a tool for women's leadership in community transformation in the US.

The educators reviewed here touch more on their goals for personal and social transformation than they do on organizational or social change results. This research looked for information on the three levels of transformation – personal, organizational, societal – that might be present as a result of the learning experience.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Overview

The purpose of this study was to document and analyze the post-training experiences of eleven participants in the Training for Community Transformation program that was sponsored by the Grail in the US to enhance the leadership of women working in a variety of different ways for community transformation in local communities across the United States. I believed that the experiences and insights of these women would be helpful in understanding how popular education methodologies can be a useful tool for women seeking to give leadership in community development and community transformation in the US.   To understand these experiences, I needed to develop a picture of the content and methodology of the training itself and the goals of the organizers. Secondly, a general understanding of the women involved in the training was necessary in order to select a purposeful sample for in-depth investigation. This preliminary information was essential for building an understanding of the post-training experiences of the participants, including their situations and contexts, types of uses, elements used, their view of its usefulness, barriers faced, and problems identified.

This chapter describes the methodology of this study and includes discussions around the following nine areas: (1) A rationale for the choice of a basic qualitative research approach, the tools of the study and an overview of the study. (2) A general

description of the research sample, including the research site, the sampling strategy

used, and the profile of the sample. (3) An overview of the information needed in this

study: contextual information including participant contexts, demographic information

about the participants; perceptual information -- what new skills and attitudes and

behaviors they learned in the training, how they used what they learned and what were

the organization and community impacts of their use; theoretical information: their

insights about Freirean methodology and practice in the US. (4) An overview of the

research design, including all of the steps from data collection to data analysis, a review

of documents, interviews, transcription, translation and coding procedures and analytical

frameworks. (5) The details of data collection methods: pilot study, literature review, the

strengths and weaknesses of the survey and structured interviews and procedures

followed. (6) An account of the steps involved in data analysis and synthesis, including

the use of electronic data management and analysis software and the utilization of

thematic network tools. (7) Disclosure of the ethical considerations attended to --

confidentiality and anonymity measures taken to protect interviewees. (8) Issues of

trustworthiness – procedures followed and examples of measures taken. (9) Information

on how limitations of the study were addressed.

Rationale for Qualitative Research Design

A qualitative research design was used because the intent of this research is to document

and analyze post-training experiences and insights, principally through the perceptions

and experiences of the participants in the training. Qualitative research is directly

concerned with "lived experience".   The qualitative research uses an *emic* or insider's

perspective which privileges the voices of learners and makes it possible to document participant judgment on the success or failure of the training and the methodologies, as well as learning what other factors influenced the outcomes. This approach, therefore, was exactly what the research question aims for – using the lens of different women's experience to better understand the possibilities and problems in using Freirean methodologies for women's leadership for social change at the community level.

Qualitative research investigates multiple realities. This was a study with multiple actors and contexts: the Grail, the Program Team, the facilitators, and the program participants in general, the survey respondents, the interviewees, and myself, the researcher, as participant observer. A qualitative research framework uses this complexity to make comparisons from all these perspectives on the research question, therefore offering possibilities for triangulation which can enhance the validity of the findings of the study (Merriam, 1998).

In order to focus on the perceived impacts of the TFCT, I have chosen to draw on the work of Vella, Berardinelli and Burrow that proposes a tool for framing the field research process to assess popular education practice. The emphasis of this research was on understanding the outcomes of the training for learners and their contexts. The research sought to explore the relationship between the training intervention itself and changes that may have occurred – personal, organizational and societal. It was not an assessment of the training, but a reflection on its impacts.

The framework as outlined by Vella and her colleagues is useful as a starting point for several reasons. It is a framework created specifically for popular education

learning processes like TFCT. Secondly, it purports to put its emphasis on the centrality

of the voice of learners, which is precisely the emphasis that the Grail as a principal

stakeholder in this research project had as its goal. Thirdly, the focus of the framework is

helpful for an understanding the results of the learning experience as revealed through the

interaction of three things: the learning of skills, knowledge and attitudes in the training;

the organizational contexts of the learners; and the social transformation realities that the

learning process sought to influence. Merriam points out that "qualitative inquiry, which

focuses on meaning in context, requires a data collection instrument that is sensitive to

the underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data…" (Merriam, 1998 p.1).

The chief concern of qualitative research is understanding the phenomena of interest from

the participants' perspective, not the researcher's. This makes qualitative research an

ideal vehicle for this study. Reflecting the characteristics of qualitative research

enumerated by Mason, the study was broadly analytical seeking to interpret and

understand the world of the participants. This method of data generation had the

flexibility to respond to women in a variety of contexts. The information generated is

rich in detail and revealing of the context (Mason, 1996).

The research had three basic phases: (1) review of documents from the Grail on

goals, content and participants in the training, (2) in-depth interviews with 11 training

participants, (3) documentation and analysis of findings from the 11 interviews.

The research process focused on collecting and analyzing information on three

types of results as suggested by Vella: (1) Learning: skills, knowledge, attitude and

behavior changes identified by learners as their goals and the results of the learning

process. (2) Transfer: evidence of "observable differences (as identified by participants) in the performance of learners after they have completed the educational program and returned to their organization (what they are doing differently and better than before). (3) Impact: "the broad long-term results of the education program: what difference the program made to the organization and the communities where they live as a result of the learner's performance." (Vella, et. al. 1998, p. 27). This framework was helpful for tracing the experience of the learners from the training environment to their return to their own organizations and to their efforts to use what they learned during the training in their own community contexts. The framework was used to shape the broad categories for both the preliminary Participant Survey and the Interview Protocol.

The Research Sample

The Grail as a research site.

The Grail in the US is a national women's organization focused on spirituality and social justice. It has a long history of involvement with the methodologies of Freire both in the US and in developing countries. It is therefore an organization with extensive grounding and commitment to Freirean methodologies.

The context of the research was the Training for Community Transformation Program sponsored by the Grail. The program consisted of three cycles of training between July 2002 and September 2004. Each cycle of the Training for Community Transformation Program had three basic parts called phases. The Phase 1 involved a five-day residential training which consisted of seventeen 1 ½ hour sessions. Phase 2 of the training was the six-month period following the training in which participants were to

implement the training in their own contexts and to be mentored by training facilitators and Freire- experienced Grail members in their area. Phase 3 of the training was a three-day residential workshop.

Purposeful Sampling.

According to Merriam, purposeful sampling in qualitative research makes it possible to discover what is happening, understand the implications of events, and the relationships linking them (Merriam, 1998). Therefore, a purposeful sampling strategy was used because it was the approach that would yield the maximum information relevant to the research question, which seeks to explore and understand in detail the post-training experiences of participants. The purposeful sampling strategy used a lens for participant selection that identified those participants who would be most likely to have experiences and insights relevant to the key aspects of the study. Relevant selection criteria included: use of the methodologies; diversity of situations and identity; and participation in all phases of the training.

Profile of training participants.

A total of sixty women participated in the training program. 57 percent of the participants were white, 36 percent Latina, and 6.5 percent African-American and African. Complete demographic data was available only for Cycles One and Two. Twenty-five of the women in Cycles One and Two were identified by the Grail Program Team as middle-class, and twelve were identified as working-class. Of the available data on race for the two cycles, 9 of the 15 women of color were identified as working-class. White women were 41% middle class. Women were recruited from across the US and

participants came from 12 different states – Louisiana, Ohio, New York, Kansas, New

Mexico, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, California, Florida, Massachusetts and Oregon.

Women in the Spanish language training were drawn from immigrant communities from

countries in Central and Latin America. The ages of participants ranged from   mid-

twenties to early sixties. Participants were drawn from a variety of contexts including:

community based organizations, churches, institutions like nursing homes, housing

developments, universities, and the Grail itself (United Program Planning, 2003*).*

Criteria and process for selection of interviewees.

The Grail issued an invitation to all women who participated in Cycles One and

Two of the training to respond to the survey (in both English and Spanish) as a way of

participating in shaping future Grail work on Training for Transformation. Participation

in the survey was completely voluntary and neither the Grail organizers nor I had any

control over who responded although Grail staff made many appeals for responses and

took some information by telephone. Twenty-six women responded to the survey

questionnaire (See Appendix A Participant Survey Results Summary).   Their social

justice concerns included poverty, community development, women's empowerment,

education, housing, youth, the elderly, and the environment. These women were

involved as volunteers, as staff, as members, as leaders, and as teacher/facilitators

(Nazombe, 2005).

Following this, I met with the Grail Program Team to establish criteria for the

creation of the pool of potential interviewees from those who had completed the survey.

Two basic criteria were established: participation in all three phases of the training, and

completion of the participant survey form. The Program Team reviewed the names in the

survey respondent potential pool to identify participants who met these criteria. A short

list of 15 potential interviewees from Cycles One and Two was created. We decided to

eliminate those respondents who because of illness or job change had no opportunity to

use the methodology.

The Coordinator of the Program Team sent letters of invitation to this short list,

inviting them to participate in a one-hour interview to help with the assessment of the

program. The result of this first round of recruitment was disappointing. Several of

those invited did not respond to the invitation at all or refused on the grounds of being too

busy. For example, the initial goal had been to invite five women who had participated in

the training from the Cincinnati, Ohio area, in order to explore the similarities of general

context or whether they were able to provide support for one another.   I tried to make

follow-up telephone calls to each of the women. However, only one of the five potential

interviewees, a national Grail leader, agreed to participate. Further consultation in the

Program Team developed some additional strategies. First to approach two of the women

who had participated in the pilot study was approved. The reasons for this included their

familiarity with the research project and existing rapport with me as well as an

opportunity to chart their progress over time. Both agreed to participate. In addition, the

criteria were adjusted to open it up to some persons who were unable to attend Phase 3 of

their training but were known to be highly motivated. It was agreed that the survey could

be completed once there was agreement to participate in the interview. Finally, I

suggested recruitment from two specific geographic areas, primarily based upon the

situational contexts of participants: (1) to attempt to recruit one of the two Immokalee,

Florida participants because of a high level of organizing among immigrants workers in

that state, and (2) to seek to recruit participants from Louisiana because of their

involvement in hurricane Katrina and post-Katrina activities, which came shortly after

their involvement in the training. I was anxious to see whether opportunities arose for

use of the methodology in these critical contexts.   One of the participants from

Immokalee did agree to participate. Based on recommendations from a Grail leader in

Louisiana, I contacted two of the participants from Louisiana. Unfortunately although

there was initial agreement to participate, we were unable to confirm any interviewees

from Louisiana. The Program Team made recommendations following the Spanish

language training for the potential Spanish language interviews.   At this point, there were

only seven potential interviewees.

Therefore, we shifted our recruitment efforts to telephone conversations.

Recruitment telephone calls were made in Spanish to Cycle Three participants, utilizing a

Spanish-speaking Grail member scheduled to handle the interviews in Spanish and with

experience in popular education and able to explain the goals and strategies of the

interviews. Response to these telephone requests was much more positive. All four of the

women contacted agreed to participate.

The recruitment process took place over a period of some 24 months and

overlapped with the data collection process itself. A final sample of 11 participants

agreed to be interviewed. Ten of the 11 women interviewed have attended all phases of

the training, and 8 of them submitted the survey form. The eleven women who agree to

be interviewed at the end of this process were diverse in background and age and contexts of work. Seven were immigrants from El Salvador, Uruguay, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, the Democratic Republic of Congo. The immigrant women ranged in age from 33 to 52 and had lived in the US from 5 to 15 years. One woman was a student from Kenya. Four were US-born. Two of the 11 were involved in graduate studies. Three women were under 30 at the time of the interview. Ages of the 11 women ranged from the late 20's to over sixty.

Overview of Information Needed

In order to explore the three dimensions of the research question -- Learning, Transfer and Impact, it was necessary to gather different kinds of information. First, it is important to learn more about the educational event context, in particular as much as possible about the specific content of the training itself. But it is important also to learn as much as possible about each of the participant's own context. Secondly basic demographic information on the participants' race, ethnicity age etc. is also valuable to provide points of similarities and comparison of differences between and among interviewees. It was critical to understand the participant's own perceptions of the training, their attempts to use the training and any effects that the training may have had on them and on the organizations and communities where they work. Finally, gathering information on the specific ways in which Freirean methodology and theory were used by other Freirean practitioners added a critical perspective on Freirean theory and practice that could be a yardstick for assessing participant experiences in their contexts.

Research Design

The research design involved 14 steps.

(1) The first step was drawing on the results of a pilot study of six participants from the Training for Community Transformation Program. The goal of the pilot study was to learn whether a support group of participants would help women use the methodology. This study identified issues related to use of the methodology that helped shape the research process.

(2) The second step was the initial review of the Grail planning documents, which stated the organization's goals for the project in terms of content and in terms of participation.

(3) The research proposal was developed and the Grail Program Team was approached with the idea for their comment and subsequent agreement to participate in the process. The Grail agreement was based upon their own interest in assessing outcomes of the training program.   The Grail Program Team agreed to collaborate and assist in development of a survey for participants in the training. The research proposal also drew on the framework suggested by Vella and her colleagues for assessing the impact of popular education projects. In consultation with the Grail Planning Team, it was decided to focus the research on the post-training experiences of participants. Following the approval of the research proposal, application was made to the IRB for approval of a research study involving semi-structured interviews.

(4) Once IRB approval was obtained, a review of the initial round of survey responses helped guide the discussion with the Program Team about its selection criteria

for potential interviewees. The Participant Survey data was helpful for the creation of a

body of basic data that included the demographic details of participants as well as

information on experiences with the methodology and their perceptions about its

usefulness. The results of the Participant Survey also enabled the creation of a pool of

potential interview participants and development of criteria for participation in the

interview process, including the elimination of those women who for overriding reasons

had not had opportunity to use the methodology.

(5) A second review of Grail organizer documents, as well as the training

program reports, filled in information and gave further explanation to the responses

received in the Participant Survey. The combination of the survey and the Grail

documents made it possible to develop a provisional picture of the process and content

and mood of the training.

(6) The recruitment of interview participants followed, involving expanding the

original outreach methods and including telephone calls, emergency e-mails, and

personal recruitment by Grail staff.

(7) An Interview Protocol was developed that reflected the Vella outcome

assessment categories and could be shared with interview participants as soon as they

agreed to participate.

(8) Simultaneous with the recruitment process was the creation of the

mechanisms to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of interviewees, including the

creation of an agreement of informed consent and its guarantees of confidentiality as

approved by the IRB.

(9) Semi- structured interviews began while the recruitment process was being completed. Semi-structured interviews made it possible for interviewees to give the fullest possible consideration to the question and for interviewer's to use follow-up questions in order to probe and deepen the information gained in the responses.

(10) Once English interviews were completed, they were transferred from cassette tape to digital recording and sent out to a professional transcription service and then reviewed by me comparing interview field notes also listening to the original tape and making corrections where the transcriber had questions. Spanish interviews were also converted from cassette tape to digital recording, transcribed by a professional transcription service and then translated, using a computer translation program. The final step with the Spanish translations was the correction of the translated texts by the Spanish language interviewer.

(11) All interview transcripts then had an initial coding carried out in two ways: first each individual person's transcript was coded, identifying the basic three categories of Learning, Transfer and Impact but noting the specific question that was addressed. Secondly, composite documents representing all interviewees' answers to each of the interview question were created and then re-coded within the categories Learning, Transfer and Impact in order to begin to establish common elements in the responses to each question.

(12) The development of the findings involved the identification of thematic networks within each of the composite question document and the identification of

supporting texts for each theme within the broad framework of Learning, Transfer and Impact.

(13) The development of the analysis of the findings used the information gained in the literature review as a yardstick for assessing how the findings conformed or did not conform to the understandings of Freirean theory and practice contained in existing literature.

(14) Conclusions and recommendations were written reflecting the findings and offering suggestions for action and further research based on them.

Data Collection Methods

Insights from the Pilot Study.

In the spring of 2004 I conducted a three-month qualitative research: Training for Community Transformation Training Community Research Project. The research project involved working with a focus group of 5 women who had been participants in the Training for Community Transformation Program, and one woman experienced in popular education, who was working with two of the TFCT participants. The purpose of the research project was to examine whether a collective support process could assist women trying to use what they learned in the training in their own contexts. The goal was support and problem solving. The research involved meetings of the Training Community focus group, individual interviews and observation. Two of the members of the Training Community were included in the current study. One of the Training Community members was a member of the Grail Program Team and was directly

involved in the current study including participant selection criteria and final assessment of the results of this study.

The pilot study results had several important impacts on the current study. The pilot study revealed several interesting and interrelated impacts of the training on participants: all of the participants developed new attitudes toward themselves, participants developed new attitudes toward the role of leadership, and participants learned to value new ways of leading--skills learned in the training.

Participants also developed new insights into the connection between changes in their   style of leadership and changes within the character of relationships within the organization. These insights influenced the construction of the survey and the Interview Protocol, as well as additional follow-up questions used during interviews. (See Appendix C Participant Survey and Appendix D Interview Protocol). The goal was to test within the framework of the Interview Protocol whether the experiences of the women in the pilot research project would also be revealed in the larger study.

The pilot study involved a variety of identities and contexts. The Training Community discussions and individual interviews revealed that identities such as ethnicity, race, language and experience played a role in each participant's use of the training methodologies. Therefore, the present research Interview Protocol sought to clearly identify these identities and to explore with each participant the role that these identities played in their efforts to use the methodology in their contexts.

The work with the Training Community also revealed the complexity of determining analytical codes and generative themes. The researcher's first efforts at

analytical coding based upon frequency of comments proved to be inaccurate at identifying the generative themes named by Training Community group members. More careful listening to the contents of interviews was necessary to determine those experiences that constitute true generative themes for participants. It also suggests the importance of not confusing discussion of the learning tasks identified by training facilitators automatically with generative themes for participants. What was most important to training designers was not necessarily most important to participants. One final insight from the pilot study was with regard to the limitations in my role as researcher. At the conclusion of the pilot study I identified the fact that I was unable to participate in or observe the training directly as a handicap to my ability to know what happened in the training and to fully understand participants' reactions to it. Unfortunately this was not a handicap that could be remedied in the current research since no further trainings were held after I began the research. For the present study I have had access to more extensive accounts of the training, including copies of most of the codes that were used. This has been helpful but did not in my view make up entirely for not being able to observe the training first-hand. However, I was able to use the perspectives of Grail Program Team members who did participate in the training as a way to make up for my own handicap in this area. In what follow, I outline more specifically the procedures I followed to conduct this study.

Literature review.

The goal of the literature review was to document the perspectives and practices of Paulo Freire and others committed to the use of a popular education methodology. The

object was to relate that information through the lens of the three categories for impact assessment of Learning, Transfer and Impact. Therefore, the theory and philosophy of Paulo Freire and others were explored in terms of potential learning of theory, skills, attitudes and behaviors. The record of practitioners in the field helped to establish the parameters for understanding Transfer. And finally accounts of changes occurring in local context as a result of the methodology helped create a fundamental understanding of the concept of Impact as it might vary in different situations. The wide scope of the literature review presented a complex picture of the practice of popular education which was helpful for hearing and judging the experiences of the Training for Community Transformation participants.

Documents.

Materials pertinent to the training were prepared or collected by the Grail staff and Program Team and handed over to me in 2005. These included: Grail project descriptions; training workshop reports, which provide the only source of documentation of the training curriculum; partial documentation of participant assessments and expectations recorded during the course of the three training sessions; participant impact statements; and participant backgrounds. These documents were open-coded according to the three broad categories of the assessment model: Learning (knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior) Transfer and Impact.   These documents were then axial-coded with regard to sub themes appearing within the three broad areas.

Three basic types of data were utilized: Grail Training for Transformation program documents, Participant Surveys and Survey Findings, and transcripts and notes from individual interviews.

These three distinct types of evidence were collected which cumulatively represent a chain of evidence from the macro-level of the three trainings and 60 participants through the completed participants surveys of 26 participants, to the micro-level of the eleven women who were interviewed. The macro and intermediate level information provided the contextual background for an in-depth understanding of the experiences of the 11 interviewees.

The Grail organizers' documents were useful to document the goals and perspectives of the creators of the Training for Community Transformation Program. They articulated the basic philosophical and political understandings of the Grail that led them to create the program. In addition, they reflected the history of the Grail with Freirean methodology and the Grail's fundamental belief in that methodology. The training documents were helpful in providing an overview of the basic elements of the training as well as the methodologies used to present different aspects. However, reading the training documents was not a substitute for being able to observe the training itself. Because there was no opportunity to observe the training directly, gaps remain in an understanding of exactly what happened in the training- what the emotional response level was for different parts of the training. This is particularly important because it is impossible to tell from the content summary which parts got the most emphasis or took up the most time during the training. It is only possible to make assumptions about which

issues were of most importance in the training based upon the reflections of the interviewees and conversations with the Program Team.

Survey.

The Grail undertook a survey of participants in 2004 on the impact of the training as the first step in its process of assessment of the Training for Community Transformation Program. The content of the survey was the result of consultation between the Program Team and me and was circulated in both English and Spanish (Appendix C Participant Survey).

The survey attempted to gather basic data on each participant: the type of organization, their role in the organization, and their social justice goals along with basic demographic information for themselves and for their community. In addition, the survey asked for the participants' perceptions of how they were using the training, how effective they thought it was, and what barriers they saw to being able to use it (Learning, Transfer, and Impact). Participants were also asked to comment on the usefulness of having a partner to work with and ongoing support from the Grail. One of the drawbacks to understanding the results of the survey is the fact that some participants responded to the survey only a few months after they finished the training while others were receiving the survey up to two years after they had participated in the training. Therefore, it was difficult to directly compare their responses.

I received copies of 26 completed surveys either sent to me by the Grail staff or directly by interviewees; I reviewed all the survey forms and created a summary

tabulation of the responses. This represented approximately a 43 % response from participants (Appendix A).

Semi- Structured Interviews.

Interviews were conducted with 11 Training for Community Transformation Program participants. Four interviews were conducted face-to-face and seven interviews were by telephone. Five interviews were in Spanish and six were in English. The time of the interviews varied from 30 minutes to approximately 90 minutes. All interviews were recorded on cassette tape, and then converted to a digital format. I conducted interviews in English, two face-to-face and four by telephone. Five of the English interviews were professionally transcribed by Wordsworth Interpreters of Vermont. I transcribed the first interview because it was conducted in a high noise level situation and difficult to hear. One tape from this interview was lost. Four Spanish interviews were transcribed by Legal Language Services, a professional translation and transcription service and then initially translated using Word Magic Translation Professional 5, a computer Spanish-to-English translation program. These transcripts were edited for accuracy by a Grail member, Carol Barton, based on the notes taken during the four interviews that she conducted in Spanish. One other interview was conducted in Spanish but the interviewer produced only brief summaries in English of the responses and it was impossible to retrieve the recording of the interview. I was present at all the interviews. During all but one of the Spanish interviews, I was an active participant in the interview and intervened as

appropriate to ask follow-up questions. Five of the interviewees were known personally

to me before the research project. Two were participants in the earlier pilot study.

The same Interview Protocol was used for all interviews. (Appendix D) Three

interviewers were used, myself for all the English interviews and two other Grail

members conducted interviews in Spanish. One of the strengths of the interview process

was the conducting of the interviews in Spanish. This gave participants opportunity to

express in their own language and at length their experiences and their insights. One

Spanish speaking participant indicated that if her interview had been conducted in

English her answers would have been very short. One Spanish-speaking interviewee was

interviewed in English at her request. Her answers were for the most part brief and the

interview might have been more successful if conducted in Spanish.

The semi- structured interview format created an opportunity for a good rapport

between interviewees and the interviewers. The handicap of telephone interviews was

mitigated by the fact that three interviews that I conducted in English were with women

that I had met in different Grail settings. The Spanish interviewer achieved a good

rapport because there were preliminary phone calls to seek agreement to participate and

to share the fundamental information about the research project and the questions that

would be asked as well as to give reassurance about issues of confidentiality and

informed consent and allay any fears that participants might have. The first two

interviews served as kind of a field test for the Interview Protocol and for me as an

interviewer/researcher. The first interview, conducted in a very noisy public space,

revealed the importance of the location of the interview as a factor in its ultimate

outcome. The quality of the sound of the interview tape was poor, making it very difficult to create a transcript. Also this first interview revealed the importance of the disciplined use of the Interview Protocol to guide the conversation rather than a more free-form conversation in which, hopefully, all the questions would be covered. The interview was good but its quality was not fully reflected by the transcript. The other preliminary interview was in Spanish. This interview helped make it clear that it is important to understand and verify the qualifications of an interviewer. For this project knowledge of and familiarity with popular education language and methodology made an important difference in the ability of the interviewer to carry out the interview successfully. In the first Spanish interview the interviewer was inexperienced in the methodology specifically and so she had no capacity for asking follow-up questions or for getting the participant to expand on any points. This preliminary interview also showed me the importance of my active participation in each interview. Although conducting the interview in both Spanish and English can interrupt the flow of the conversation, as a principal researcher, I needed to follow closely the exchanges during the interview in order to add additional questions or to follow-up and get further clarity on particular points that were made. The first Spanish interview did not have any of these features and, therefore, suffered because it was impossible to match the rich detail of the other interviews.

Contents of the Interview Protocol.

The Interview Protocol was organized to cover the three broad areas of the Vella paradigm: Learning, Transfer, and Impact. Questions about Learning were further subdivided to gain information about knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors.

Knowledge questions asked participants to give an overall assessment of the Training for

Community Transformation methodologies, to a give their opinion of the effectiveness of

the training in conveying the principles and methodologies of Paulo Freire by discerning

which principles they felt might be useful to them. Skills questions asked participants to

identify the specific skills that they felt they learned in the training, and also to identify

any that they felt were not relevant for their 'work. The third set of questions was

concerned participants' attitudes and behaviors. These questions sought to document

personal changes in attitudes about the participants' ability to work on social justice

issues, changes in the attitudes toward the work within their organization, changes in

their ways of work, especially those that they felt were a result of the training itself.

Transfer questions included descriptions of situations in which skills were used;

interviewee judgment of the effectiveness of those skills and what other skills they felt

might be needed. The other question under Transfer dealt with barriers to the use of

Training for Transformation methodologies, especially any impacts of ethnicity or race or

gender identity.

The final portion of the interview included questions on the impact of the training

on their organizations and their communities. Participants were asked to identify the

problems that they had worked on using Training for Community Transformation

methodologies and the role of the methodologies in the changes that they had seen so far.

Participants were also asked to identify obstacles outside of their control in the local

contexts that made it difficult for them to use the methodology. The final question asked

them about any support that they felt would be helpful to increase their ability to use the methodology in their own contexts.

The Interview Protocol was supplemented by follow-up questions to gather more details and examples of participant experiences. The basic demographic data on each participant was also gathered at the time of the interview. Each person chose her own pseudonym. All interviewees received a copy of the Interview Protocol prior to the interview, with a request that they review their experiences as a way of preparing for the interview. The interviewers were assisted in the interview process through review of interviewee responses to the survey questions prior the interview. In addition, each interview built on the previous one, in that new information learned in one interview would often then become part of the questioning in the next interview. For example, comments on the difficulty of creating new codes made during one interview then became the topics of deeper probing in subsequent interviews.

A complete data base was created, which includes all the participant materials listed above along with all of my field notes taken during each interview, my running notes and comments over the course of the study, and the interview notes of the Spanish language interviewer. All of these materials are stored in a password-protected computer to which only I have access.

Data Analysis

  Organization of data.

Here is a definition of data analysis: "Data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, or otherwise recombining the evidence to interests of the initial propositions

of a study….nevertheless, every investigation should start with the general analytic

strategy – yielding priorities for what to analyze and why." (Yin, 1994, p.102) The

analytic strategy that I used for the data available relied on a theoretical proposition that

led to the study – the research question itself: What do the post-training experiences of

eleven women participants in the Training for Community Transformation Program

reveal about the applicability of Freirean theory and methodology as a tool for women's

leadership for community transformation in the United States? Embedded in this

research question are the three elements of the assessment model. The first part of the

question – 'the applicability of Freirean theory and methodology' - --speaks to

investigation of the Learning: knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors that participants

believe they learned in the training. The middle parts of the research question – 'as a tool

for women's leadership for community transformation '—speaks to the Transfer of that

learning to their own organizations and contexts. The final part of the question –'in the

United States' – speaks to the third part of the assessment model, the Impact that they

have in the context in which they are working and what constraints a US context put on

their exercise of the methodology.

To strengthen my understanding of the content and goals of the training itself, I turned

first to the Grail documents. My first step was to gather all of the reports of the three

cycles of training that included the expectation and assessment comments of the

participants. These represented one data set.   Within these documents I color-coded the

assessment, expectation, and implementation comments identifying Learning, Transfer

and Impact so that would be easy to compare these comments with the comments from

interviews and the surveys. Another data set was the descriptions from Phase Two of

each cycle in which participants described their efforts to use the methodology after the

Phase One training session. Added to this were the few participant impact statements

that had been solicited by the Grail Program Team for fund-raising purposes. This data

was also initially coded for Learning, Transfer and Impact in order to make it easy to

refer to later.   The third data set was the participants' survey forms. Their responses

were aggregated and a summary sheet of the results was created. I color-coded the

summary sheet to reflect the assessment model categories and also returned to the

individual survey sheets and recorded all answers to individual questions in separate

documents with the same coding system.

Interview transcripts: a first step was to take each interview transcript and identify

those sections of the text which referred to each of the interview questions. Each

interview was then color-coded on the computer by question. This made it possible for

me to sort and compile all their responses to each interview question. This first coding

exercise revealed the ways in which certain topics repeated themselves across the

questions. For example, comments about ways in which the training brought about

personal transformation turned up in response to the question asking for a general

assessment of the value of the training or even in the description of their actions within

their situation. From this coding process I created a separate document for each question.

And then I reviewed each document identifying major sub-themes within that question. I

then created a document for each question that was a reordering and a compilation of all

of the comments from the interviewees under each of those sub-themes. For example,

under the broad category of overall assessment there were answers that clustered around

the role of the methodology as an empowering tool for local people, the training as a

place for personal transformation, as well as comments on the limitations of the

methodology.

Analytic category tool.

After doing this initial coding work by hand, I shifted the data into the Atlas Ti

computer-based data management and analysis program. Over time all of the question

documents created earlier were uploaded into the Atlas Ti system. In the Atlas Ti system

I coded all of the interview questions again, sometimes using the codes created in the first

round of coding and sometimes creating new codes. With the Atlas Ti program I was able

to look at the created codes and to experiment with linking codes to explore new levels of

meaning. In this part of the data management and analysis my thinking was informed by

the work of Attride-Stirling on the use of thematic networks as an analytic tool for

qualitative research. Attride-Stirling proposes the methodology for exploring "the

understanding of an issue or the signification of an idea …" (Attride-Sterling 2001 p.

387) The construction of thematic networks involves identifying themes within coded

data. Using these themes, networks are constructed reflecting three levels of themes from

the most narrow through the broadest. They are called basic themes, organizing themes

and global themes. Using this I was able to move beyond the categories of Learning,

Transfer and Impact to deeper levels of meaning without losing that broad framework. It

proved to be a very useful way of identifying and uncovering connections that might

otherwise have been missed by looking solely at the responses to each question. The

networks that were created were a better reflection of the actual insights and experiences voiced by the participants.

Research journals.

Throughout my research I kept a journal, writing down my reflections on my readings, my encounters with the training participants and others in the Grail, and random thoughts of connection between different pieces of information. Periodically I have gone through this journal to see the themes that reoccur and to include insights from my process in the text.   These ideas have continued to shape my thinking about the research question and the experiences of training. I also kept extensive notes during each interview and I used these notes as I went through each transcript in order to clarify for myself aspects of our conversation, particularly those that went beyond the strict confines of the interview questions. Notes from the interviews conducted in Spanish were used to correct and clarify the translations of the Spanish language interviews.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research process protection of the rights of interviewees has been a prime importance. A full commitment to confidentiality and anonymity was promised in the informed consent documents and has been honored throughout the process. All interviewees were asked to choose a pseudonym during the interview process. These pseudonyms are used throughout the study. Information about their contexts has been carefully worded in order to avoid any direct identification of anyone except by those intimately involved with the project. At the same time it was important to be able to give maximum detail about the context of each woman in order to understand more fully her

experiences and her insights in that context. Each interviewee was sent a copy of the

verbatim transcript and given the opportunity to make changes or amendments. None of

the interviewees exercised this option. The transcripts are in a password-protected

computer files and I am the only person with access to the hard copies. Cassette tapes and

CD's of interviews are stored in a locked file cabinet to which only I have access.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Both Merriam (1998) and Creswell (1998) speak of the need to handle issues of

validity and reliability in qualitative research. Because the results of qualitative research

cannot be easily reduced to the statistics that are common in quantitative research and do

not portray "objective" reality, Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) have suggested alternative

language for satisfying the need to demonstrate the measures taken to control potential

bias in a qualitative research study and to demonstrate its accuracy. To replace the

concept of validity, which is used in quantitative research, Bloomberg and Volpe (2008)

suggest the use of the term credibility, while Creswell (1998) suggests verification. The

use of these terms is intended to signify how well a study reflects reality. The study used

several elements that established its methodological credibility. The voices of the

participants during the interviewed were compared with the voices of the larger pool of

participants in the survey and their perceptions of Freirean theory and methodology could

be measured against the characteristics of Freirean theory and methodology reported in

the literature review. Although Mason (1996) challenges the use of triangulation in

qualitative research, the diversity of each context and participant made possible a kind of

internal triangulation of information in which similarities and differences in the

experiences could be documented. In addition, the training and participant documents

provided data against which to evaluate the reports of the participants of their

experiences.

Also other kinds of measures were taken to enhance the credibility of the study.

First, during the first three years of the study I was involved as a member of the board of

the Women's Institute for Social Transformation (WIST), which had the responsibility of

carrying forward the Training for Community Transformation initiative as the successor

to the Program Team. The discussions in the WIST Board were focused on assessing the

training and seeking to determine what future steps the Grail should take in relationship

to existing trainees and future promotion of the Training for Community Transformation

methodology. Participation in the WIST Board represented an opportunity to check my

perceptions of the training based on the interviews as well as opportunity to question the

TFCT facilitator and other trainees about the training content.

As referred to earlier, all interviewees were given an opportunity to review the

transcripts for accuracy. In addition, member checks were carried out through the full

discussion of the findings, analysis, and conclusions of this research with two persons

who were in the training, one of whom was a participant in the present research. Both

had been involved in discussion about the research since its outset. These women are

both in the national leadership of the Grail and were able to give helpful comments on the

accuracy of the portrayal of the training as well as reflecting on the interpretation of the

findings and the suggestions for action that could be taken by the Grail in the future.

These conversations confirmed the research finding about the emphasis on personal

transformation and the lack of emphasis on the broader political and structural

dimensions of community transformation during the training.

Care was also taken to address the interpretive credibility of this study. The

results of the semi-structured interviews made it possible to portray the realities of each

context using thick and rich description for 10 of the 11 women interviewed. From these

detailed transcriptions it was possible to identify themes in the responses through patterns

of language and content. The detailed results of the semi-structured interviews also

revealed any differences between contexts and negative experiences in the use of the

methodology.

Dependability

According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), dependability in qualitative research

refers tracking the processes and procedures used to collect the data, the process of

management and interaction with the data as it has developed over the course of the

project. The process for interpretation of the data began when the first information on

participants was collected and continued through the determination of the findings, the

development of analysis based upon those findings and the description of conclusions and

recommendations which were built from the findings analysis. The process for

development of each of the three broad areas of findings, analysis and conclusions

followed a similar pattern but each set of findings required some variations in the process

reflect my personal choices. However it is possible, using the documents created and

stored, to take any finding and trace backward to the code families created in Atlas Ti, to

the individual codes created around that particular topic, to the composite participant

responses based upon the question related to that topic, and individual participant

responses where the question dealing with that topic was coded. For example, Findings

2. 5 and 2.6 are concerned with barriers to use of the methodology. In Atlas Ti a code

family named Barriers was created which included 15 different sub codes and a total of

38 quotations. It is possible to review the documents: code family, 15 codes and the

accompanying quotations through Atlas Ti. The composite document files include all of

these individual documents that trace the steps in the process. The interaction with the

data after the findings were determined involved a more intuitive process of juxtaposing

the findings data with my own interpretations based upon my experience in the project

and perspectives from my field notes and journal. For this I also I drew on the insights

from Bloomberg and Volpe's Interpretation Outline Tool and Sample Consistency Chart

of findings, interpretations and conclusions (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2008, page 216

through 220). This process was recorded on large sheets of paper that are also a part of

the data analysis record.

One example for this process there was a section of the interview questions that

dealt with transfer. There were three broad questions in this section: the description of the

context where the skills were used, which skills were effective, and the barriers faced.

After coding all three of these questions, using Atlas Ti and the related codes that identify

something about personal transformation, such as personal transformation, personal

skills, leadership, I was able to bring these codes together as a code family and then

examine them again in detail to determine the themes that could be identified under the

broad category of personal transformation. Having identified these themes, I could look at the specific remarks made by different interviewees in order to group them and reflect on the differences in the contexts that generated often similar responses. This meant that my understanding of the role of personal transformation as an outcome of using this process was greatly deepened by the ability to examine it cross-interview, cross-context, and cross-question. Using a similar process to determine the findings, the analysis, and the recommendations and findings, enhanced the dependability and confirmability of the research.

Transferability

Transferability refers to what kinds of extrapolations are legitimate as a result of this study. Is it possible to make similar discoveries in other situations that are similar? It must first be said that in this study each context, each person is in many ways unique. In addition the research project itself is the record of a slice in time for each participant and in each context. In that way the precise insights and experiences will never be duplicated. However the findings of this study can give another researcher or other organization things to look for in order to see if there would be similar outcomes. Some of those commonalities would include: the experience of personal transformation; the role of the receptivity of an organization in the success of the methodology; the distance to or from the 'village' ideal context projected in Freirean theory; the role of class, race and ethnicity in learning situations; and skills and theory learned in the training.

Limitations of this study addressed

The Training for Community Transformation program involved a total of 60 women from a diversity of backgrounds, experience and contexts around the United States. The first decisions on limiting the study had to be how to choose a sufficiently large sample to be able to reflect on the trainees as a whole but not so large as to be impossible because of the limits of finance and geography. As the selection process proceeded for a purposeful sample, intentional and unintentional factors influenced the final narrowing of the study. One of the limits of the study that was unintentional was related to the difficulty of getting a wide response to the request for interviews. Because we were dependent upon volunteers, we were unable to construct a perfect demographic mix since the response to the request for interviewees was uneven. In the final selection a higher percentage of Spanish-speaking women agreed to participate than were proportionately represented in the total training population. On the other hand, the final sample was intentionally limited to those women who had actually used the methodology. This made it possible to focus in on the use of the methodology rather than creating a more general picture of the outcomes of the training, which would have been that some used it and some did not use it. This limitation served the research purpose best.

The necessity of conducting more than 50% of the interviews by telephone was also a limitation of the study because we were unable to monitor body language and other physical aspects of the interview which might have given us additional clues to the attitudes and judgments of the women. However, the decision to hold telephone

interviews was based on the need to include women from all around the country in the research instead of limiting it to those in the New York metropolitan area.

Another area limitation of this study had to do with potential bias that I brought to the study because of my own history as a feminist popular educator. I began the study with a fundamental knowledge about Paulo Freirean popular education practice and a history of 15 years of feminist popular education practice. The research and interview questions were framed based upon my existing knowledge. In my own practice feminist popular education is a political project. The questions raised to participants sought to explore this issue, while hopefully not prejudicing their answers. As far as possible the interview questions were not focused on any particular understanding of Freirean practice, but were designed to allow all the participants to describe their experiences without attaching philosophical labels to what they did. As the findings indicate, they were encouraged to present their own interpretation of Freirean theory. The semi-structured nature of the interviews gave participants who were interested in thinking about the theory of popular education an opportunity to do that, and their insights influenced my own thinking on the subject.

Another personal limitation for this study was my inability to communicate directly with the Spanish-speaking women. This, however, was moderated by the fact that the Spanish-speaking interviewer is also a feminist popular educator and, therefore, completely familiar with the issues being addressed in the interview. In addition, she is a close personal friend of mine and we have often worked together as feminist popular educators. She is familiar with my interests in feminist popular education and my

concerns. Therefore, she was able in her follow up questions to amplify the conversation in ways that were very helpful.

One other serious weakness of the study was my inability to observe the training program or any of the women using the methodology. As noted earlier, after the decision to go ahead with the research project was made, there had been a proposal for a follow-up workshop, which would have involved some of the participants in this study. However, because of a lack of sufficient registrations this training was canceled. By not being able to view the training, I had only the written reports to reconstruct what actually happened in the training. The training facilitator did not have lesson plans or notes that could be shared. Because this training is so heavily dependent upon process and interaction between people, not being able to see the training created in my mind a serious gap in my understanding of the training. This weakness was partially overcome through conversations with the Grail Program Team/WIST Board, which included the principal facilitator. In this way I was able to learn something of her philosophy and style of leadership. Serving on the WIST Board gave me some idea of how her personality may have affected the training. The only other indications of the intangible quality within the training comes from the comments made by participants, especially in the Spanish language training, about the facilitator and the ways in which she was helpful to them. The inability to observe the women as they attempted to use the methodology was both an advantage and a disadvantage for the research. The focus of the research was on the perceptions of the participants. If I had been able to observe them in their context, I would have been adding my own perception to theirs about what happened. This could

have distorted the findings of this study. On the other hand, if I had been able to observe

them, I would have been able to ask them very specific questions about their practice as I

was viewing it. This could have led to greater detail and description of their uses of the

methodology in context and their immediate reactions to its use.

Summary

    This chapter provided a detailed description of the methodology used for this

research. A qualitative research strategy made it possible to collect and analyze detailed

outcome data in order to carry out an assessment of the impact of women using Freirean

inspired popular education practices to pursue community transformation in US contexts.

    A purposeful sample of eleven participants in the Training for Community

Transformation program were selected from a pool of 23 respondents to a participant

survey from a total participant group of 61. In depth semi-structured interviews

represented the principle data collection tool. This was supplemented by participant

surveys and training program participant and organizer documents. A variety of

measures for triangulation and member checking including review of transcripts by

interviewees and review of findings and analysis by Grail partners helped to insure the

study's credibility and dependability.

    Utilizing first the categories for impact assessment developed by Vela,

Berardinelli and Burrow an interview protocol was developed to gather information on

Learning, Transfer and Impact from the interviewees. Data management utilized the

Atlas Ti computed based data management system for coding and organizing the results

of the interviews. The development of Findings was guided by a process of the

development of thematic networks as suggested by Attride-Stirling. This made possible

the identification of the principle themes in participants' experiences as well as

identifying differences and nuances in their experiences. Analysis and Conclusions were

constructed reflecting consistency with Findings. Recommendations for popular

education practice, training and further research were presented.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This qualitative research study sought to document the post training experiences and perceptions in local contexts of eleven women participants in a popular education training program. The aim of this research was to present the voices of participants. Bogdan and Biklen suggest that "thick description' is the tool that makes it possible for the researcher to portray dimensions of reality that are complex and difficult to separate from one another. This allows the researcher to share the original voice and open the possibility of new understanding for the reader. (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982/1998) In effect, the portrayal of all the nuances of a voice rather than a sound bite. Using thick description these findings sought to convey the complex perceptions and feelings of the participants as accurately as possible and in large part in their own words so that subsequent analysis can be more directly related to their views.   It is hoped that the interviewees' reflections on their experiences provide useful insights on the research question: What do the post training experiences of eleven women reveal about the applicability of Freirean theory and methodology for women's leadership for community transformation in the United States.

This chapter is organized to begin with information on the setting of the study: a basic understanding of the goals of the training in the eyes of the organizers; the essence of the content of the training; and the initial goals of the women participating in the training. This information provides the reader a frame of reference to better understand

the experiences and perspectives expressed by the eleven interviewees. Grail documents

provide important information on the goals of training organizers and the content of the

training. Information on participant goals are found in the eleven participants' own

descriptions of their goals during the interviews and those of all women who completed

the Participant Survey.

Once this broad context has been outlined, research findings are organized under

the three broad categories that Vella and others that identified as the three important

lenses for looking in a popular education educational event and its outcomes -- Learning,

Transfer, and Impact. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of what was learned.

Context of Findings

Organizers Goals.

Grail documents articulate broad themes as goals for the program, based upon the

historical roots of the organization and assessment of current realities. They make it clear

who they wish to train and why; what the content and process of that training will be; and

what the Grail hopes the outcome of the training will be in local communities.

 In a preliminary document Grail organizers summarized their hopes for program

participants: "They (will) experience the building of trust, the equality of voice, the

profound value of listening and being listened to and yes, in many instances, are

transformed…or at least, are repositioned along a pathway towards a new understanding

of community development and a way of creating conditions to support it. " (United

Program Planning, 2002) Organizers of the Training for Community Transformation

Program proposed three broad interlinked goals and outcomes for the training:

challenging existing leadership styles and developing new ones; empowerment for

community leaders for strengthened engagement in community development; revitalizing

the Grail. To achieve these goals the content of the program emphasized: critical

analysis; theory and methodology of Paulo Freire; leadership for empowerment;

understanding community contexts; facilitation tools; and group process.

Challenging existing leadership styles and developing new ones.

The background discussion document, *Training for Community Transformation

Experiencing the Paulo Freire Method* which was written in 2002 suggested that the

training must ask hard questions about the role of being change agents. The Grail TFCT

planners believed that the lack of change at the community level could be attributed to

community development work and community organizers that had lost focus on listening

to the real needs of community and substituted professional expertise.

> Often, even with participatory intentions it is the community workers looking
> upon the community that seek to determine the needs of that community. They
> make decisions to involve community members in programs on crime, wellness,
> education, drugs, justice and other problems that are surely pressing and need
> attention. However, to return to the work of Paulo Freire, it is only when people
> have strong feelings about an issue that they are willing and capable of moving
> beyond apathy to action. Many issues that community workers deem critical are
> seen as part of everyday life to those who faced them continually. So the
> professionals chosen point of entry is often not the community's point of entry.
> (United Program Planning, 2002, p.2)

Empowerment skills for community leaders.

To address this problem the recruitment documents promised participants would

learn effective skills for working within low income and marginalized communities and

 "why empowering people to be problem solvers for their own community is the key to effective and sustainable community development." (United Program Planning, 2002 p. 3) The documents contended that learning the task of empowerment is based on learning a set of skills, similar to the way a person would set out to learn how to 'remove an appendix or track an epidemic'. The Grail planners envisioned this work on skills in the context of development of a permanent organization.   The document summed up the hoped for impact of the training on the individual participants this way: "…the Training for Community Transformation is intended to prepare women leaders to live and work in their communities with love…" (United Program Planning, 2002). For this training therefore they proposed to recruit: leaders and activists of community-based organizations, community development workers, adult education workers, members of church based social justice programs, and community organizers (United Program Planning, 2002).

Engagement in community development for strengthened community engagement.

Grail planners also saw the training workshop as a place to draw on the particular experiences and realities of community development. There were theoretical and ideological issues that needed discussion. By sharing how community development is currently happening in communities they hoped to deepen participants' understanding of community development itself and in particular the justice issues involved in order to effect a more profound change or transformation: "Participants will reposition

themselves along a pathway towards a new understanding of community development and a way of creating conditions that support it." (United Program Planning, 2002) At the same time it was the organizers' goal that the training would help leaders to focus more clearly on very practical concerns so that. "…after the workshop, participants will be able to: identify critical issues of concern within their community, identify existing resources necessary to build a healthy community, identify solutions to community problems, and move plan solutions into action." (United Planning, 2002 p.3)

Revitalizing the Grail.

The early planning document also reveals that the Grail saw the Training for Community Transformation program as a means for revitalization of the Grail organization in particular: to develop and articulate a common methodology among Grail programs, to provide a stimulus for doing more grassroots Grail-sponsored work, and to offer tangible and practical training program as an entry point for younger women attracted to the Grail" (United Program Planning, 2002). The Training for Community Transformation Program was the Grail's own vision for the work of social change: "The Training for Community Transformation is to be part of the ongoing work or focus of the Grail which allows for application and additional training and reflection for the purpose of empowering local communities to meet self – defined needs." (United Program Planning, 2002. p. 1)

Program Content.

Review of the TFCT Training Reports reveal that the workshops concentrated on five interconnected and overlapping areas of learning: critical analysis, Freirean learning

theory, leadership for empowerment in community contexts, facilitation tools and group

process.

"Training for Community Transformation is an experiential workshop where

participants will not only learn a process but live that process." (United Program

Planning, 2002, p.1) These words describe the essence of the curriculum for the Training

for Community Transformation Program.   Information on the content of the program is

found in the reports developed after each session by the organizers. The work of each

training workshop involved a series of participatory activities in which the learning areas

noted above were experienced in an interconnected manner.

Critical analysis.

Building a critical understanding of the contexts in which people live is a key

element in Freirean theory and practice. Freire called the process "conscientization".

Heaney, US critical educator/activist, explains it as: "…identifying contradictions in

experience through dialogue and becoming a 'subject' with other oppressed subjects-that

is, becoming part of the process of changing the world." (Heaney, 1987, p.7) Participants

had multiple opportunities to explore this concept and to develop their own skills in using

Freirean critical analysis tools such as codes and problem posing questions.   For

example, one session was devoted to understanding and naming oppression. The topic

was introduced using the generic caged bird code. The code is the picture of a bird inside

a cage with the door open. The facilitated discussion which followed used five questions

of analysis: Describe the picture in your own words. What is the problem? What cages

exist in our lives? Why do we stay in these cages? What would take for each of us to fly

out the open door? The code presented a familiar problem – the feeling of being trapped but not knowing what to do - raising questions but not giving answers. The code allowed learners to take a second look at their own reality by seeing it indirectly through the code. In this way, before the tool critical analysis was named or explained, participants were experiencing it. This methodology which modeled learning-by-doing was used repeatedly during the training.

Freirean Learning Theory.

Freirean theory and practice is based on a theory of adult learning in which learner understanding and needs play an active part. "The animator's main work is to help participants to 'unveil' their situation." (Hope, Timmel & Hodzi, 1984, p.14) For example, participants were led through a process to develop a description of good educational practice based on their own successful learning experiences. After building their consensus on good education practice, another code was used to deepen their thinking on two kinds of educational practice: domesticated and liberating. Once again analytical questions provided a way for participants to relate the experience of the story to their own experience of learning and to contemplate what kind of education they wished to model. They used these understandings to first help shape their own learning in the training and then they could later apply this understanding to their work with the methodology in their own contexts.

Leadership for empowerment work in community contexts.

In the theory and practice of *Training for Transformation* as articulated by Hope and Timmel, Freire's understanding of the critical role to be played by the facilitator cannot be underestimated. "The role of the animator is to set up a situation in which genuine dialogue can take place – a real learning community where each shares their experience, - listens to, and learns from the others." (Hope, et. al.1984, p.10) The TFCT training therefore used a number of different opportunities to raise the issue and ask participants to look at the role of facilitation both abstractly and with specific reference to their own communities.

For example, examining the concept of 'help' was a part of deepening a critical perspective on the role of a facilitator. Participants received a handout which outlined the two approaches to helping: one which begins with 'listening' and ends with 'change, health and well-being for all'. The other approach begins with "give to, do for, tell," and ends with the 'status quo'. This gave participants a chance to look at their work and the work of others in their own communities and to think about what kind of help was being given. Later in the training the participants simulated the use of the key tools of the methodology – generative themes, codes, action planning etc. in a local situation in order to both practice and dissect the processes that they hoped to use when they returned to their own communities.

Facilitation tools and group process.

In addition to the practical and theoretical discussion the role of the facilitator, an important part of the training was experiencing and practicing the basic facilitation tools suggested by Freire, Hope and Timmel. The TFCT facilitators used the tools to explain the tools.   Those tools included: generative themes, codes, problem posing education questions, and action planning as discussed above. One other important learning and leadership tool and concept is that of 'listening'. In the workshop the listening skill referred to several different ways a facilitator might work. Each way of listening had the goal of helping the facilitator to give full attention to the learner and to enhance the collective learning process. One example was practicing five ways of listening as a tool for facilitation: clarifying, restating, interested and encouraging, understanding of feelings, and summarizing.

In *Training for Transformation*, Hope and Timmel assert that group skills are needed for conscientization: "Good communication from person to person and from group to group is vital if a movement is to make the most of the resources that each one has to bring, and to maintain motivation and creativity in the struggle." (Hope, et. al. 1984, p.18) The facilitators of the Training for Community Transformation workshops gave special attention to the building of community among participants. Training exercises helped the diverse group of women get to know one another, their realities and to build community among the members of the group.   Group process also helped the participants to be involved in shaping the content of the training to meet their needs. (United Program Planning, 2003)

Summary.

The program of the TFCT reflects a strong commitment by the workshop sponsors and

facilitators to provide an experience of the Training for Transformation methodology that

included taking seriously the contexts represented by each of the participants. The

training sought to use group process to enhance and amplify learning. It relied heavily on

time-honored methodological tools like generic codes and participatory exercises for use

with its very diverse group of participants. But overall the program took seriously the

Grail goal of training women in skills to be used for local involvement in community

transformation.

Training Participant Goals

Sixty women participated in the Training for Community Transformation and

twenty six completed a Participant Survey, including 8 of the interviewees. There is a

close enough similarity between all participants and those completing the survey to view

the survey responses as representative. The 26 survey respondents represent 43% of all

participants. The demographics of those responding to the survey vary slightly from the

overall participant group. Fifty-eight percent of survey respondents were White as

compared to White women as 53 % of all participants. Latina women survey respondents

and total participants were an identical 38%. Only one from the African

American/African group responded to the survey.

The Participant Survey asked: What are your goals for the use of the training?

Ninety-two percent of all those responding to the survey responded to this question.

Participants' goals for use of the training are focused on three areas: a) skills for action

around specific issues and in specific contexts; b) personal transformation and its

connection to work in the community; and c) using the training to energize the Grail

itself.

Emphasis on action.

Thirty-eight percent of respondents (10) used language related to action at the

local level to describe their goals for the use of the methodology. The action included

issues they wanted to work on, venues in which they intended to work, and contextual

problems that they hoped to address. The goals cited represented a mixture of specific

community problems they wished to address, addressing issues related to race and

ethnicity in their context, and the challenges presented by specific work environments.

The community issue of education represented the largest single area of interest. Four of

the participants are involved in education. Two are working with organizations seeking

to change the public schools. Morgan, a Grail member, expressed her goals for the

training this way: "to use the TFCT process as a way of uncovering generative themes

and equalizing voice on the way to action involving parental and community involvement

in neighborhoods schools..." Gabriella, a community organizer on education linked

changes in parents' attitudes to changes in the schools as her goal: "work with parents in

public schools to identify the issues/concerns and have parents develop a plan to address

the concerns that they want. Have parents run the organization."

Two women, Eleanor and Njoki, are in graduate studies and link their uses of the

methodology to their present educational contexts and to their career choices. Njoki,

looking at both her immediate and long term reality, connected the training to her goals

for work with her students. For the multicultural after school program in Los Angeles,

where she was working at the time of the training she said: "My goal was to educate

students on different cultures so that they may understand each other's backgrounds and

cultural practices better." (Njoki) In graduate school her goals for the use of the training

expanded to using the methodology to work with Kenyan university students working in

local community development activities. In response to a question about her goals for

her dissertation research she said:

> …I'm going to focus on students in the university…how they use their knowledge
> and put it into application. But it has to be within a community context…I think
> where I would see this coming is more specifically would be through the kind of
> training that I went through at the TFCT. To kind of put the students through
> similar training, and then have them go and live in that community…But then
> they would have to go through this kind of training to be able to understand how
> to, you know, listen to what is going on. (Njoki)

Four women expressed interest in action around the community issues of food,

housing and environment. In each case the goal was using the skills of the training for

better organizing and as a way to educate individuals and groups on those issues. For

example, one respondent describe her goal as: "Better community organizing for

environmental and social justice in order to create access to sustainable and healthy food

in an overly polluted and food secure neighborhood." (Laura)

Action goals were also linked to the realities of race and ethnicity in certain

contexts. Two middle class white women, working in Latino communities expressed

goals related to realities of race and ethnicity. For example, Betty spoke of being "able to

apply the Freirean practices in an organization that focuses on Latino/Hispanic affairs in

a predominantly Caucasian area with a booming Latino/Hispanic population."   While

Donna wanted to use the methodology to change relationships: "to create better

connections with members of the Latino community and strategies to focus on their

issues and work with them to carry out possible solutions."

For two women action goals were shaped by the context of their work within

traditional service agencies.   Ellen works for a Catholic social service agency that is

cooperating with the United Way. She described her goals for the training in this manner:

"to strengthen the community on many levels (as dictated by the United Way)." But she

acknowledged the organization's goals and the training's emphasis on the goals of the

community were not in harmony: "We told United Way today we would promote the

development of the community development corporation. This was not what the people

wanted or said they wanted." Another participant who works for an agency dealing with

children and non-custodial parents also found that her use of training skills had to be

reshaped by the organization mandate and focus on helping clients to better understand

the rules and purposes of the organization's service. "I am able to try to use codes in

helping people to relate to those using our services, to our clients to help them understand

the reason our program is run the way it is (the rules), and to help the community

understand the need for supervised visitation/exchanges." (Margaret)

Personal Transformation.

A second goal identified by a number of participants in the Participant Survey

was related to the issue of personal transformation. Six participants (23%) describe their

goals in terms of a variety of types of personal impacts.   There was a spectrum which

focused at one end beginning with personal change for the individual trainee almost

exclusively and then broadened to link that trainee transformation with that of others in

the community. One trainee said: "First internal transformation." Katie, who is staff in a

community based organization that serves primarily low income whites, saw the training

and its methodologies as a way to "raise my awareness of folks in communities,

aspirations for themselves and community." Ruth who works with a recovery

organization that serves addicts, alcoholics, the mentally ill, and street people expressed

the view of the methodology as a tool as providing a link between empowerment for

recovery by her clients and changes within community : "less for community and more

for personal empowerment, They cannot work for community unless they know

themselves."(Ruth)

Esperanza, one of the interviewees and a participant in both English and Spanish

language training workshops responded to the question from the perspective of its impact

on her and the group that she hopes it will impact: "For me it was very good because one

learns to value ourselves as the women that we are and to respect one another. This is

very important. I hope that we can continue using this methodology not only for us but

for youth as well."

Echoing this view Gabriella, an education activist said: "To personally change, to

help others and their attitudinal attitudes so that leaders and parents might transform the

community and their school"

Revitalizing the Grail.

Nine of the survey respondents were either Grail members or involved with local Grail groups. Two of those respondents, both part of the national leadership of the Grail, included hopes for using the methodology within the Grail in their responses to the goal question. Morgan specified Grail gatherings as one of the places where generative themes might be uncovered and voices equalized for action. Lynn, on the other hand, wanted "to have the hands-on understanding of this Grail program to promote it within (and beyond) the Grail.

The Interviewees

In order to understand the post-training experiences of the women interviewed it is useful to have a general picture of each of the women interviewed in their context. While each woman's experience is unique there are some similarities in their contexts and roles and it is useful for the overall picture of their identity to consider them based on these similarities.

The women interviewed for this study represent a broad diversity of backgrounds, contexts and perspectives on popular education. The interviewees are broadly representative of principle types of work and contexts for all the 60 participants in the program – community based organizations, church groups, the Grail, and a variety of social service agencies. The eleven women can be grouped under five broad subsets: (1) the academics; (2) the church workers (3) the organizers; (4) the Grail freelancer (5) one-time users. The following profiles give a picture of the racial and ethnic identity of the

women, an overview the contexts in which each is working, their prior knowledge of popular education and their view of the personal impact of training.

The Academics – Njoki and Eleanor.

Njoki is a 29-year-old Kenyan woman who is doing doctoral studies in educational policy and leadership in Ohio. She came to the U.S. in 2001 to do masters studies in California.   She is in process to become a Grail member. When she took the training she was working at MAP - Multicultural After School Program serving children ages 5-13 in a diverse affordable housing complex in California. Njoki said that as a graduate student in education she had read something about Paulo Freire but that it is the Training for Community Transformation Program that really introduced her to the methodology.

Njoki's plans for the future call for her to return to Kenya when she has completed her doctoral studies in Educational Policy and Leadership. Ultimately her work would involve not only students but also local community persons and organizations knowledgeable in the realities of the community and seeking to work for community solutions. She would like to train university students to help them use their academic knowledge in the service of local communities.

> I plan on using TFCT training for the community service classes to educate
> students how to work with communities, such that the students do not view
> themselves as the "long awaited savior" for the community, but as the "yeast that
> goes unnoticed yet it works to leaven the bread. (Njoki)

She added that the TFCT training helped her "to better understand the needs of the community from an insider's point of view rather than seeing herself as a consultant to the community…I now see myself more as a facilitator …for I believe that the community members are the actual change agents in their situations." (Participant Survey)

Eleanor is a white middle-class woman of Finnish family background currently pursuing Finnish doctoral studies. At the time of the training she was in her mid 20s and had just completed one year as an intern with the Grail at their Cornwall Retreat Center in New York. Throughout that year she was exposed to the philosophies of Paulo Freire and the Training for Transformation methodology that are embedded in the organizational culture of the Grail. At the time of the training she was teaching in the Women's Studies Department at a state university of New York. "The makeup of our women's studies classes were 75 percent white students and 25 percent students of color, primarily lower income and middle-class and overwhelmingly women." (Eleanor) Her original goal for using the Training for Transformation methodology was: "to improve her teaching and to create an atmosphere for transformation of consciousness to take place" (Participant Survey).

At the time of the interview Eleanor is teaching Finnish classes in connection with her doctoral studies. The makeup of those classes was 50 percent male 50 percent female, primarily U.S. and foreign students 20 percent of whom or Asian-Americans. Although the academic atmosphere within the university Finnish classes was less conducive to use of the Training for Transformation principles and practices, she was

able to incorporate some aspects of the training. She credits the training was giving her a greater recognition of the knowledge of her students as well as her responsibilities as a teacher. "It is not a passive role!" (Participant Survey) "I learned that people learn in different ways and so I have tried to incorporate different ways of teaching my students." (Eleanor)

The Church Workers – Esperanza and Maria Jose.

Esperanza is a Honduran immigrant in her mid 30s. She has lived in the South Bronx New York for more than 10 years working as a babysitter. She is now employed as a supervisor for the Clothes Project of her Catholic parish which is located in a low income neighborhood. The Clothes Project uses volunteers to sort donated clothes that are then sold to the community. She attended two cycles of the Training for Community Transformation Program. She attended the first cycle which was held in English but because of her difficulties with the English language she also attended the final cycle which was conducted in Spanish. Since the training she has become a member of the Grail.

As a part of the Clothes Project she works with the volunteers who are a mixture of nationalities but are all Spanish-speaking. They are primarily low income and middle aged to older women who do not hold other jobs. The group meets regularly for discussion and meals. Since the first training in 2003 Esperanza has worked with this group (at first with Maria José and another Grail member who is also on the parish staff) utilizing methodologies like codes learned in the Training for Community

Transformation Program to build community within the group and to think about issues within neighborhood.

She had no knowledge of the philosophies Paulo Freire before the training but she reports that the training had a profound impact on her life. Esperanza describes it this way: "I learned to value myself and other women, giving more to the project at hand." Maria José is originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo and came to the United States in 1995. She has been living in the South Bronx of New York City for the majority of that time. She works as a nurse's aide at a hospital in her area. She is a Grail member. Before the training her exposure to the methodologies of Paulo Freire was limited to the generalized exposure that comes from participation in the Grail. Maria José participated in the first Training for Community Transformation Program in 2002 and has since that time working with primarily Spanish-speaking low income women's groups in her Catholic parish using the methodology, although she speaks no Spanish. Her first group was the Clothes Projects group that she facilitated along with Esperanza who was also in this study and another Grail member.

She is currently working with another women's group, many of whose members are Spanish speaking but also bi-lingual. This group has chosen home visitations as their project. Maria José agreed to be the facilitator for the group when no one else stepped forward.   A Spanish speaking co-facilitator of the group provides translation as needed. She believes that the training made a major change for her: "I have the confidence of leading groups. I know that I can do it without problems. I will depend on the group, if

the group accepts me or not. But (at least I think I know that) I can be sent anywhere that I'll be able to communicate with that group." (Maria José)

The One Time Users – Laquelé and Amelia

Laquelé i**s** a 55-year-old immigrant from Uruguay who had lived in the United States for three years at the time of our interview. She had heard about Freire and his methodologies through the work of others in Uruguay – persons working with children at risk and from her own daughter who took workshops on marginality as a part of her engineering course. She lives in an industrial city in western Massachusetts that is currently experiencing job loss**.**

She is involved with three groups. A woman's anti-violence group that is based in the community center located in the low income neighborhoods where she lives. This community is primarily Hispanic, although there are some African refugees. The women's group itself is largely made up of white middle-class activist women. She worked with Amelia to facilitate a mini-version of the Training for Community Transformation workshop with this group.

She's also involved with a mixed male and female leadership group of Uruguayan immigrants who were political activists in Uruguay before coming to the United States. The third group is a group of immigrants organizing to support immigrant rights. Laquelé said the training had special meaning for her: "For me personally, it was like therapy. I was coming from my own struggles in my own country…and my whole life

living under a dictatorship…living the problem of very vertical organizations, very

hierarchical, where they manipulated the outcomes…so this methodology, this workshop,

was very important for my personal life."

Amelia is a 50-year-old Honduran immigrant. She first came to the U.S. in 1999.

She learned about Paulo Freire while studying at the University in Honduras. Later she

also learned about it as a member of a health workers union in her country. She is a Grail

member.

She worked with Laquelé in Massachusetts to facilitate a Training for Community

Transformation style workshop for the women's antiviolence group. The goal of the

workshop Amelia said was simply "to have them understand a little bit about the

methodology"

In her view the training made possible a major change in her ability to use the

methodology: "I can appreciate with more clarity how to use the methodology to make

community meetings more dynamic and I feel more secure in doing my work."

(Participant Survey) Amelia says that she grew in her understanding of teaching: "I think

its hard learning how not to be a teacher…to allow the group to talk and decide…not to

teach them but to learn together."

The Organizers – Diana, Gabi, Gabriella, April

Diana is a 35-year-old Guatemalan immigrant who has lived in the United States for 15

years. She lives in a region of Florida that has seen intense immigrant organizing in

recent years. She works in a hospital laundry that employs 60 men and women. She also

works with a shelter for abused women. Diana had no previous experience with Freirean

methodologies. She explained: "the truth is I didn't know much about it…I didn't know what to do so that people were there where it was needed; so that there was support, so that there was unity."

At the laundry she is one of a small group of leaders seeking to mobilize other workers to unite in order to negotiate with management for better working conditions like working hours and breaks. Participation in the training has changed her feeling about herself and her relationships to her co-workers.

> I feel, really, I feel better spiritually. Because I feel like I contributed something. Now people come to me, to listen to advice as a friend….   It gives me encouragement when I can encourage them. I know that if they see me doing it, they'll know they can also do it. (Diana)

Gabi is at 38-year-old immigrant from El Salvador who has been living in California for 11 years. She works for a cooperative that develops ecological housecleaning businesses for low income women.   She is responsible for outreach and development of new cooperatives as well as training. All of the women that she works with are Latina women, although they come from different countries in Central and South America.

Although she had not read any Freirean material before the training, she had learned about the general concepts during the study of journalism in El Salvador between 1988 and 1990. In addition, she heard about the theories when she began working with the cooperative.

Gabi feels that the training provided an opportunity to reexamine her own

possibilities and liabilities as a leader: "…learning about the role of leadership and what

it means, recognizing my weaknesses and strengths and how to take advantage of those

strengths, personally that was the essential part. To learn to recognize the role that I play

and how to open a space or close a space as a leader."

> And she added: …I learned that I am an instrument. That I can propose how
> things will start but I can't control where it's going to go, or what the final
> outcome will be or final goals it will achieve. It helped me to grow personally so
> that on the one hand, I could let go of that guilt, but on the other hand, I will free
> up the group and not impose the direction that I wanted to go. (Gabi)

Gabriella is 52 years old and is originally from the Dominican Republic. She had

been in the United States five years at the time of our interview. She also, like Maria

José and Esperanza, lives in the South Bronx section of New York City. Her

neighborhood is made up primarily of Latinos and African-Americans. The Latinos

come from a variety of countries primarily in Central America: Puerto Rico, the

Dominican Republic, Mexico, El Salvador, and Honduras.

She is a teacher and a counselor by profession and learned about popular

education by being involved with a religious organization in the Dominican Republic that

was doing grassroots organizing. In her neighborhood she is a volunteer leader in a

community organization that has created a parent group which seeks to improve the

quality of education in the neighborhood which historically has been very poor. She

attended the Spanish –language TFCT training along with another parent in the group and

in partnership with a staff member from the organization who was also a co-facilitator of

the training. The idea was that the three would cooperate in the use of the methodology

within the parents group. She believes that the methodology has been helpful to herself

and to the community. She said, "It has been very positive. In the community where I

work it is helped the people to have more confidence in themselves – increased their self-

esteem. Also for me personally it's helped. Even though I already knew about it, to be

more solid in how I do it."

April is a white woman in her late 20s currently doing graduate study in England.

At the time she took the TFCT course she was working as an AmeriCorps Vista

Volunteer for a statewide organization in Louisiana whose mission is to prevent violence

and promote peace in the state. Her goal was to bring people together who were working

on different aspects of violence to address together issues of violence in their community.

Her work was primarily related to an alliance of organizations whose representatives

were middle management level social service agency staff. Her task was to mobilize and

motivate these staff on these issues of violence so that they could then transfer those

ideas into work with people at the community level. At the time of the interview she was

working on the staff of a former Congressman and has since enrolled in graduate school.

April found that the training affirmed some of her own views on using a participatory

process with groups and also helped her understand the limits of her role in those

processes. April said that: "The training reinforced the importance of working in

workshop settings over business meeting format. This gave me confidence in my

preference for the former. It gave me a new vision of leadership: It's not about me; it not

all my responsibility."

The Freelancer

Morgan is a white retired college professor in her '60s who lived in Cincinnati at the time of the interview. She is a member of the Grail and serves as a part of the national leadership. Her familiarity with Training for Transformation is of long-standing. She revealed that she has even used some of the methodology in her college teaching. Morgan was actively involved in several groups in her community. She was the president of the residential association of the housing complex where she lived and then the president of the nonprofit corporation that the housing complex created. She was interested in public education and participated in a group working on building new schools in her neighborhood. She was also involved with a group concerned with ecology and has been the organizer for the Women's World Day of Prayer in Cincinnati. Finally she also helped convene a Grail group in Cincinnati called Politics and Spirituality. She considered all these groups as opportunities for putting the Training for Community Transformation methodologies into practice.

For her the implementation of the methodology has been slower. She explained her problem: "it has to do with the constituencies that I'm working with…I think it was very useful. And it created in me a yearning to do it, and yet I have not been able to pull it off."

Findings

Interview questions to participants were organized under three broad categories. Learning is the category most closely related to the educational event itself. Participants were asked what they learned about Freire in theory, what skills they found most useful

and what aspects of the training became the impetus for personal transformation.

Learning includes: knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors. In an ideal popular

education event new knowledge would be transmitted. In the case of the TFCT training

this refers to Freirean educational theory, definitions of the role of facilitators etc. The

skills involved include codes, listening, and generative themes. These tools are critical to

the practice of popular education. Transfer shifts from the educational event itself to the

learners' practice of the methodology, especially within the learner's organization. In

exploring Transfer, participants were asked what they were able to do with the

knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors that they learned in the training and what affect

they might have had on their organization. Impact widens the circle still more to look for

further insight on contextual issues. Interviewees were asked about their goals in the

context, whether additional support would have been of assistance and why contextual

problems made the work of application of the methodology difficult. Below is a listing

of the Learning, Transfer and Impact findings from this research to be reported below.

Each group of the findings begins with a summary finding.

Finding 1 Learning: Participants learned theory and skills in order to help people help

themselves and experienced significant personal transformation at the same time.

Finding 1.1: A majority of interviewees described the fundamental goal of the training to

be learning how to help people and to help people help themselves.

Finding 1.2: Nine of the eleven participants (81%) identified important personal changes

as a result of the training, particularly the growth of self and self confidence as

educational facilitators.

Finding 1.3 Interviewees identified ways in which using the methodological tools of listening, codes, and generative themes were important for learners self learning and also changed the trainees understanding of the role of a facilitator.

Finding *2* Transfer - Participants were able to use TFCT methodologies within their own contexts to deal with issues of identity and organizational culture and mandate in their efforts for self help within organizations.

Finding 2.1 Organizer/participants were able to use their TFCT training to address specific problems and create specific opportunities for their organizing to help others help themselves.

Finding 2.2 Some participants experience demonstrated how use of the methodology made possible the development of new perspectives and new consciousness.

Finding 2.3 Three women used different tools within the methodology to help create situations of comfort, safety and mutual respect that encouraged a mutual learning context.

Finding 2.4 Interviewees used facilitation skills learned in the training to enrich their work and add to its success.

Finding 2.5 Forty-five percent of interviewees identified barriers to the use of methodology created by the intersection of identities such as race, ethnicity, class, language, gender, marital status and age in their contexts.

Finding 2.6 Organizational cultures and expectations created barriers to the use of the methodology.

Finding 2.7 Two participants devised interesting ways to handle situations of barriers created by the conflict of identities.

Finding 3 Impact: Contextual impact in US contexts was constrained by the diversity of organizational mandate and cultures, the diversity of receptiveness levels of learners and constraints within the methodology, as learned, to deal with diversities**.**

Finding 3.1 Four women linked the use of the methodology to successes in the social justice efforts of the organization or changes in organizational culture.

Finding 3.2 Four women articulated a sharper vision of social justice and organizational impacts might be through the interaction of method, organization and content.

Finding 3.3 For the majority of interviewees (9 of 11) barriers to using the methodology fell into three broad categories: (1) organizational culture and mandate, (2) the learners, and (3) the constraints imposed by the methodology itself.

Finding 3.4 Working as a team provided opportunity for experiencing the support needed to carry out the methodology.

Finding 3.5 Interviewees believed that participation of other members of their organization in the training would increase motivation, ownership of the process, and strengthen the organization's use of the methodology.

Finding 1 Learning - participants learned theory and skills in order to help people help themselves and experienced significant personal transformation at the same time.

In assessment of a popular education initiative Vella identifies learning as "changes in the learners' knowledge, skill, and attitudes as a result of the program." In

this research the exploration of Learning provided a way to gather information about the

educational event that was the TFCT training as experienced by the participants (Vella et.

al. 1998, p.22). Through the eyes of the participants we learned the high points of the

training and the goal and purpose of the training. These reflections provided a

counterpoint to the information available in the Grail documents about of the training and

the content. Overall the participant responses reflected a deep sense of what the training

meant to them in terms of its potential for their work and its effect on them personally.

**Finding 1.1 A majority of interviewees described the fundamental goal of the
training to be learning how to help people and to help people help
themselves.**

Interviewees were asked for an overall assessment of the training and to identify

new principles that they learned. The TFCT methodology as a self empowerment

strategy for groups and communities was a major theme of their responses. These

responses also reflect their understanding of the kind of leadership role they would play

as well as the usefulness of the tools they learned.

"So I think it was just important to find out that, you know, there is a way of getting

people to look at their problems and then trust the process totally for them to come up

with solutions to their own problems." (Njoki),

"I liked it that they explained, liked how they gave me ideas to be able to help the people,

and to help them help themselves." (Diana)

A part of this was a basic understanding about the goals for the impact of the

methodology on the organizations and communities. Their understanding of the impact

on communities centered in their belief that the methodology leads to a change in the

community's feeling about itself and its capacity to affect change within their own

reality. Fundamental to their role would be their willingness to trust that group process

would produce the solutions needed. Interviewees said that the methodology had the

potential to increase the community's self-esteem increasing its depth of involvement in

working on the problem by helping it develop its own tools for analysis and problem

solving.

 "I learned how to educate others so that they may gain independence and self respect, as

well as confidence in themselves."(Esperanza)

"I think it opens the way for open communication within communities and provides

opportunities to pull out their own needs, to feel that they are part of the project." (Gabi)

        Their responses also revealed that the training provided important insights into the

role of the facilitator in the process. Njoki was very clear on the idea that the role of the

facilitator and the potential success of the process is dependent on a facilitator not

imposing her views on the group, in order to enable this the group can make its own

decisions.

> I do like the fact that if a solution is going to be worthwhile and if it's going to be
> more sustainable then it has to come from the people who have identified it as a
> solution, as opposed to an external person.…I'm not imposing myself or my views
> or what I want done, and I'm just letting the process take itself. And people will
> definitely lead themselves to where they want to go. (Njoki)

        Another dimension of this view relates to the TFCT understanding of learning as

a mutual process. Facilitators are co-learners in the process. Amelia referred to the

profound effect that the training had on her view of teaching and learning: "There is

nobody teaching, in all we are learning." For three of the women this meant insights into

changes needed in their own actions as facilitators: the need to give respect to those they

would work with; to learn how to draw ideas out of a group rather than planting them;

learning the humility of sharing from their own experience. Njoki said: "And instead of

just coming in with what you think are very good ideas to solve their problems, at least

give them dignity enough to see how they can contribute to being the solution to

whatever their condition may be".

> When I went to the workshop, I was looking for a magic wand to make everything better. Then I realized that it's not like that. It's the fruit of a lot of work. It takes practice. I gained the skill of generating ideas from the group itself, not my telling them things. How to create situations where people can come to their own conclusions. (Gabriella)

> Not only about me learning something and saying I can help you, but learning in order to say, "I have this to offer you, and it's so that you can help yourself." It's not that one is going to learn this for one's self, it's to learn in order to help others, or to teach them how they can defend themselves, how they can advance…No one can make decisions for them, merely say to them, "I learned this through my experience" because I was also a woman in that situation, a victim as well, I learned this and if it's useful… (Diana)

Two interviewees identified how they could use methodological tools like codes

and analytical questions in their facilitation in order to meet the methodology goal of

helping others help themselves through creating opportunities for a group to reflect on its

own experience and articulate its own insights. "So that's one of the things that I found

really interesting about the whole process and about … how you let the people you're

working with be the ones that come up with everything, such that all you're doing is

asking the 'but why' questions. (Njoki)

"How to use codes to help a group recognize what their needs are without my telling

them. Without my putting words in their mouths, for me, that was fantastic!" (Gabi)

Finding: 1.2 Nine of 11 participants (81%) identified important personal changes as a result of the training, particularly the growth of self confidence and self-esteem as education facilitators.

One of the key objectives of leadership development is personal transformation.

Although Freire speaks more broadly of transformation of societies, feminist popular

educators make a clear link between personal, organizational and societal transformation.

So it was important to understand the interviewees' perceptions of their own changes.

Understanding these changes is a key to understanding the interviewees' perceptions of

themselves as leaders and therefore assessing the effectiveness of the Training for

Transformation Program at leadership development.   Echoing both the Grail organizers

goal of the training being a source of "empowerment skills for community leaders" and

the survey respondents emphasis on empowerment skills as their goals for the training,

interviewees spoke clearly of the changes that they had experienced as a result of the

training.

In responding to the question about how attitudes toward themselves have

changed as a result of the training five of the 11 interviewees used the language of self-

confidence and self-esteem to describe their changes. Self-confidence and self-esteem

concerns were often linked to identity and context, including ethnic history and language,

which may reflect some of the realities faced by the immigrant women of the study

seeking to work in the United States. For one interviewee who is an African English

speaker operating in a primarily Spanish-speaking context the training transformed her

attitude about her own abilities giving her capabilities to lead that she did not believe she

had before.

> Yeah, the training really gave me confidence about, you know, I believe in me
> that -- lots of time we don't think we have low self esteem. But I think I used to
> have low self esteem, because I used to feel like -- I never felt like I could run a
> group. But with the training, you know, I know how to do it… Many people tell
> me you can do it, but deep inside me, I didn't feel that way. But when I took the
> training I just, you know, felt like yes, I can do it. (Maria José)

Laquelé, who is from Uruguay found that the training helped her overcome her

feelings of discouragement about organizing based on her experience in her own country.

She also found that the training gave her the increased confidence that she needed to

express her own views the when they differed from those of other in her group.

> Yes, most of all, I believe that I learned that it can be done. Because I had come
> from my country very demoralized, and I gave myself the opportunity here to
> consider why did these things happen? It gave me confidence in myself, no?
> Knowing that it can be done.
>
> I think more than anything that it has given me more assurance to speak, to not
> remain silent. I think that before it was a lot harder to say things that were not in
> accord with the group-things that the rest of the group did not agree with. It has
> given me the ability to say what I think. (Laquelé)

Facility in English was the issue for Esperanza but she felt that the confidence

gained from the training had a positive effect on her desire and determination to gain

greater language fluency.

> At times I can be down and quiet - hard on myself, I have gained self-confidence and self-esteem. I have been able express myself in English, even though I am not 100% efficient in the language but have addressed issues with the help and support of people in my community and, have not allowed the English language to become an obstacle in my life. (Esperanza)

Another outcome of confidence building through the training was the expression of a new understanding of the relationship between the trainee/facilitators and the persons in the groups. These new understandings included enhanced stature within the group, clearer sense of their role vis á vis the group and a greater sense of identity with the members of the group.

 "And I understood better what I was trying to do. You know, I like got a language, you know, for what it was that I was trying to get out of my students."(Eleanor)

 "It's given me a greater sense of solidarity, helped me to be more focused on others than myself ("*mas desinteresada*"), more understanding.   I'm a little more aggressive in positive terms (less patient). (Gabriella)

Personal changes also went beyond self confidence to development of new understanding of the task of social justice and identifying the need to make changes in their own behavior, seeing places where the methodology itself challenged them to act differently were also important insights of interview participants.

 Njoki related how the training helped to make it clear to her that it is important to be sensitive to and respectful of the perspectives of those that she wants to work with. She recognized that this would mean changes in the way she worked with people, into areas where she might be less secure.

I think there has been -- yeah definitely the change was quite relevant. And I think it has made me even more confident or more willing to work on social justice issues…. I mean I've done community service before, and you know we go in, talk to people, donate something… And then it's also been a bit removed of the situation of the people who are, you know, that you're helping, right? As if most of the time it's just as if they have to be on the receiving end and have nothing to offer your life because there's nothing more they can contribute to it. And then through I guess through the training and kind of looking now at serving other people differently kind of made me realize that it's not just a matter of you going in there and trying to rescue someone from the situation from your perspective or your idea of what's best for them, but from actually listening to what they like to do to improve their situation.

So I guess that was just the beginning of seeing that you really have to learn to identify what the strengths are of the people who you think you're helping. Because you'll be amazed at how much they can do, at how much they've always been able to do, only that life may have changed, but that doesn't necessarily make them less human. And so just from the training and the way we were getting to see through how listening how you have to develop your listening skills. How you have to develop also your empathy because it may not be something that you just have or you're born with or you know of. It has to be something that you have to stretch yourself outside your comfort zone to be able to do. (Njoki)

Practicing the listening skills, dialogue and small group discussion techniques learned in the training made it impossible to relate in some of the old ways. Laquelé explained: "Well, one of the things I learned the most was to listen. To not put myself ahead of things, to not pre-judge, not to make judgments before listening."

In popular education practice an important part of how a facilitator will be effective is the issue of control of the educational context. As referred to earlier, authentic practice requires the facilitator to become a learner along with others and to be aware of the temptations to control the process. The Grail organizers goals, referred to earlier, stemmed from the critique of community organizers who determine that they know what is best for the community and act on it that rather than trusting the community

process. Two women speaking from different identity places, one white and one Latina

immigrant, voice related concerns about issues of control.   Morgan, a white woman

working with a racially and economically diverse group, acknowledged that she

understood the dilemma of control issues when using the tools of the methodology but

had not yet achieved her vision of giving up control.

> So, in some ways, that methodology of using the small groups and discussion and
> a lot of either acting out, role playing, or drawing, those kinds of things. But I
> think as a teacher I never really gave up control.   [Laughter]
> That's the big thing. And I think, 'cause personally I'm able to speak in front of
> groups or make my points or think I'm understanding. I've sort of succeeded in
> this bureaucratic system that we're stuck with... but that's why I seem to be
> having trouble making the transition to where I would let go.
> Yeah. Which I think has to happen. Yeah. And it's, I just feel like there's some
> big transition that has to happen, both for me and for my group. … And I want it
> to happen. That's the big thing that Training for Transformation gave me. Like
> this vision of how it could be. Equal and even exchange. The vision. And, um,
> well, And how to make that happen is a different thing. (Morgan)

Gabi, a Latina organizer also learned lessons about control.

> I have the tendency, when a project doesn't turn out the way I want it to, I tend to
> blame myself. I take too much personal responsibility for not having managed to
> have things turn out a certain way. After being there and after some
> conversations I had with Beth Ann [training facilitator] I learned that I am an
> instrument. That I can propose how things will start, but I can't control where it's
> going to go, or what the final outcome will be. It helped me to grow personally so
> that on the one hand, I could let go of that guilt, but on the other hand, I could free
> up the group and not impose the direction that I wanted things to go. (Gabi)

Finding 1.3 Interviewees identified ways in which using the methodological skills of listening, codes and generative themes were important tools for learners self learning and also changed their understanding of the role of a facilitator.

Central to Freire's early educational practice was the use of a set of methodological tools that Freire and his team created for their work in local communities. In *Training for Transformation,* Hope and Timmel transformed Freire's methodology into a set of clearly articulated educational process steps while adding their own insights on facilitation of group processes. As noted earlier in this chapter, in the Training for Community Transformation Program these facilitation methodologies played a central role.

Interviewees were asked to identify the skills learned in the training that would be useful in their work. Six interviewees spoke specifically about the skill of listening, in particular its affect on the learning process. Listening, as used in the TFCT Program, referred to the process for discernment that involved asking questions like: What do you see? Why is it happening? Does it happen in real life? What are the causes? What could be done to change the situation? in order to uncover layers of meaning and emotion in a particular situation. Interviewee comments crystallize an understanding of the role that listening can play in the educational process. First what it can mean to the learners: "When you listen, you give the person not only respect, but the opportunity to express themselves; to participate and have more of an understanding toward others." Esperanza said.

While, the process of listening focuses attention on the knowledge of the learner and building knowledge within the group, at the same time it imposes disciplines on the facilitator. "I learned to listen and to really allow the people to decide…the process of working horizontally had a big impact on me." (Laquelé)

The skill of listening can be used to break down hierarchical relationships between the facilitator and the members of the group because the role of the facilitator is not to be the expert but to help bring knowledge to light. Interviewees portray listening as a skill that demonstrates respect for listeners by hearing the views of the group without bias. Three of the interviewees expanded on the ways in which trying to master listening required them to change their own behavior and how it improved their abilities as a facilitator.

Laquelé explained the value of listening to her: "Well, one of the things I learned the most was to listen. To not put myself ahead of things, to not prejudge, not to make judgments before listening."

> …So [at the training] I learned that I need to let the person express themselves and I need to let them finish, to listen with real calm to understand what they're really saying. Because often we think that with the little that's said, that's enough. But no, the real thing is to know how to listen. (Diana)

> You know, (there are really) times when you do really, really need to listen. And you know without any source of judgment or at least not expressing them because you don't know what the person is going through at that particular time. You know but just listening enough and processing that…it's not just a matter of listening and hearing what somebody said, but being able to process this and kind of identify ways in which you may be helpful. (Njoki)

Codifications were one of the basic tools that Freire used to help learners in local communities develop a critical perspective on their situation. Over the years Freirean practice has developed as series of codes that have been used repeatedly in different contexts around the world because they address universal themes like freedom and bondage. Educational practitioners have also used their creativity to develop new codes for specific realities.   Three women discussed how codes, both stock codes and newly created ones, could be useful in their work.   They identified the authenticity of a code as one that helps learners to recognize the dynamics of their own reality and to use it to help deepen their own understandings as well as helping the group to think collectively about solutions.

> First it explained the story [code], and then with the same story one needs to know how to resolve problems, and that is very, it really helps one, because everything that's in the story are things that happen in real life. So yes, it is really, really good, because everything, everything exactly, everything is what's happening in the community. (Diana)

"The other part that was excellent was how to use codes to help a group recognize what their needs are without my telling them. " (Gabi)

 "We use the codes and get involved, the whole group, with ourselves you know, work together. It was for me, was the new tool …with the objective, to come and be together and people decide what they want to learn." (Amelia)

But Njoki also noted that as with the skill of listening, creating codes places special responsibilities on the shoulders of the popular education facilitator. In order for a facilitator to choose from one of the stock codes or to create a new code the facilitator

must be attentive to the situation. "Empathy, that one was also very important…you'd

have to know and live a people's situation to be able to come up with a code that would

be relevant. So I think they kind of came hand in hand." She went on to add a word of

caution about the code making process:

> …you have to have understood the situations well enough to be able to come up
> with some code that can be used to get through the ideas of what the problem
> is…it can also be very dangerous in case you do not have a proper analysis of
> what the situation is like. (Njoki)

Two interviewees commented on the usefulness of generative themes in their

work. Freire insisted that in order to move learners to action it was important to

understand the issues and concerns they were passionate about or emotional about. These

issues he called generative themes. The listening discipline was what Freire used to

initially identify generative themes. For Diana, using the concept helped her as a union

organizer:

> So I remembered that we talked about that -- how to bring people in -- that it has
> to be a topic that everyone is interested in, a topic that everyone wants to
> participate. If it's a topic they're interested in, yes they'll come to the meeting I
> remembered this and it's what we're now trying to do at the meeting. (Diana)

Gabi, another organizer explained how the use of generative themes helped her as

an organizer to relate to potential cooperative members that she was seeking to organize

by expanding their sense of participation in the effort.

> In terms of generative themes, I think that is one of the things that I have used
> most in these years, quite a lot and with success. They really worked well. I feel I
> have awakened a sense of greater interest among the partners (in the cooperative)
> that I work with. So now they feel more connected to the project because they feel

that the idea came from them, and generative theme was always opening this space. (Gabi)

Finding 2 Transfer - Participants were able to use TFCT methodologies within their own contexts to deal with issues of identity and organizational culture and mandate in their efforts for self help within organizations.

In assessment of a popular education learning process Transfer, according to Jane Vella, refers to "evidence of observable differences (as identified by participants) in the performance of learners after they have completed the educational program and return to their organization - What are they doing differently and better than before?" (Vella et.al. 1998 p. 27) Transfer shines the light on the facilitator of the educational process. In the section to follow on Impact attention will shift to the context. This part of the findings will report on the interviewees accounts of ways in which they have used a training in their home contexts along with their perception of the effect that that use has on them and on their organization.

In response to questions about how they used the training and their assessment of its effectiveness, all 11 women interviewed were able to identify one or more contexts in which they have used the methodologies of the training. Together they were able to identify more than 22 different contexts in which they used aspects of the training. Their uses of the training were varied. Elements of the training were used to create entire mini workshops to demonstrate the methodology as well as for training of an organization. The tools of the methodology were put into use in a variety of ways. The contexts were both specific locations with specific purposes and employing specific methodological

strategies and more informal use of the general facilitation skills that were a central part of the training.

Looked at together the experiences that were reported reflect the themes identified in Findings 1: helping others to help themselves, developing new perspectives and consciousness, learning as a mutual process, the critical importance of the role of a facilitator. Each story the women told contained one or more of these elements. For clarity their experiences are presented here under these four themes although it will be obvious that the themes are completely overlapping.

The Grail document *Training for Community Transformation (Experiencing the Paulo Freire Method)* suggests the following: "Participatory methods involve more than skills. There is a whole mind set, way of being and believing that are the backdrop for trust; the cornerstone of participation. It is a process that needs to be modeled and lived." (United Program Planning, 2002) The experiences and reflections of the interviewees serve as a demonstration of women adopting this mindset rather than just using a set of skills.

Finding 2.1 Organizer/participants were able to use their TFCT training to address specific problems and create specific opportunities for their organizing to help others help themselves.

Gabi works as an organizer working almost exclusively with Latinas in the context of Latino culture where one of the difficult issues blocking the progress of women from their ultimate goal is the difficulty of speaking directly about domestic violence and *machismo.* As a result of their work in the ecological cleaning business a

woman's salary is likely to be higher than that of her husband. Jealousy and anger may

be the result and abuse may be the means of control. However because of cultural taboos

women were afraid to even speak the words "domestic violence" publicly. Gabi used a

generative theme process to open the space for conversation and possibility.

> So I decided to create an activity where I showed a bird, which is one of the codes that I liked the most, which I brought from the workshop, a bird that is in the cage, exactly. And I showed it to them saying that the generative theme, the conversation we were going to have that day was to talk about what ever challenges our cooperative faced. Specifically, that cooperative, one of many, wanted to grow and be the best -- the dream we all had. Right? That we might have 50 people, our own cars for the business, etc. and that everyone would earn $40. So I put this out as a generative theme I handed out the code and they worked in small groups -- this has worked really well. It offers sufficient opportunity for each person to express herself. In general I make a groups of three -- four people, maximum, and it was incredible! I had four groups and in all four groups domestic violence came up. Three of the groups used exactly that name and one, with some doubts, didn't know how to express it or were afraid to describe the word, but the topic came up -- domestic violence. And as a result of that activity we could begin to call it by name and to begin to look for resources to help us, to learn how to overcome it, to know that it is not shameful what's happening to us and that, unfortunately we are not the only ones. And most of all, that it's not our fault, but that there are ways to stop it. So I think this was one of the activities that helped us the most, because as an organization we didn't know how to touch this family subject without them feeling like we were meddling too much in their lives. (Gabi)

The issue of domestic violence also played a role in the ways in which Diana was

able to use the methodology in her work in a shelter for abused women. Diana used a

combination of her own experience, her understanding of her role as a facilitator not to

give answers but to share her own experience as a co-learner to help the group's

discussion. She said she was happy that the training helped her to learn how to offer her

own learning to help others be able to help themselves.

In the women's support group that we have, many times they are there, and they think about it 1000 times, and they are still dominated, and they keep on thinking about it and years go by and they are in the same place. Why? Because they are afraid. So I can't tell them, "Do this." Of course not. Each one of them, it's their life. But I can tell them, I learn this and if it is useful for you, use it in this way." See? … With the women and the subject is about sentiments. The things that happen in their homes really hurt. No one can make decisions for them merely say to them I learned this through my experience and because I was also a woman in that situation, a victim as well, I learned this and if it's useful…. But to tell them that I learned this and if it's useful, try it -- that's why we go to the meetings, to listen to how to find support so they can go forward. And as I said that story about the cage, I learned and I'll never forget it. So I tell it to all the women and it's something that has stayed with all of us. We even cried, because really that was a theme from real life. It appears to be about a bird, but we are people and we are women, female birds. (Diana)

Participants also reported that they used the skills and strategies learned in the training as a part of member training strategies for their organizations. In order to strengthen their organizing work Gabriella and her TFCT-trained colleagues organized a small workshop for 15 people using selected elements from their TFCT training particularly the use of problem posing or analytic questions.

We used it to get people committed so they saw that it wasn't just my job, as facilitator, but as parents, they have power -- that they need to use that power. So, in the preparations we used the methodology of "Pablo", from the perspective that we see ourselves as a community. What's happening? What do we see happening outside? Why can't WE have the same things as citizens? As human beings? From that perspective there were many who got angry, because this is a community that is discriminated against. So in some cases they got mad, without being aggressive or becoming delinquents, but understanding this is the tools they can use for this struggle. (Gabriella)

Gabriella had high praise for the effect of the training on her organization: "It was really good and I think that the successes we had in our organizing this year stemmed from that workshop."

Freire believed that the secret to organizing lies in the ability of organizers to discern and listen to the issues – generative themes - that a community is most passionate about. It is these issues he contended that would be the ones that people would be willing to rally around for action. Diana used the concept of generative themes to help her develop strategies for increasing the effectiveness of her union organizing. Diana and other union leaders used this idea to build their work:

> Yes, that's what we are doing now because, while we have failed many times before and people were not responding. Some were tired, others had visits, and something always came up. So we realized that we had to do something more, and then I remembered about this and I said, let's start with this subject that we're actually confronting that affects everyone. Because if it's a problem that doesn't affect all of us, only one or two people, and that's not really a group. So we needed something that affected everyone that energized us to go, because we all felt we needed to talk about that issue. (Diana)

Finding 2.2 Some participant experience demonstrated how use of the methodology made possible the development of new perspectives and new consciousness.

In the popular education context it is important to understand both what is learned and how that learning occurred. In responding to the questions to describe how they use the training and their assessment of its effectiveness, interviewees spoke of the new perspectives and new consciousness that emerged as a result of their work and the process that led to those new insights.

Working with a group of women who are professional educators, Amelia and Laquelé organized a workshop that would give the women an experience of the Training

for Community Transformation methodology through exploring the differences between

two types of education: liberating and domesticating. The process made it possible for

these educators to view and reassess their own understanding of education. The two

women presented one of the codes learned in the training followed by a discussion.

Laquelé described the process: "We used this story. We put the story on consideration of

the group. We made them repeat with their own words. After, this, we gave them time to

argue: What was the problem? What can become? Who is going to make it? Those stages

were obeyed." Amelia added:

> Because the issue is that two methodologies and then they were by themselves
> they were checking and learning which one was which, the difference is why one
> is a good methodology and it was then from themselves that it came out… And
> then they, they themselves that were analyzing it and it was amazing… what they
> see, because they see what it means to work. The whole group making the
> decision. It was an example for them, you know to learn together. It was an
> example and then they were very amazed about that. (Amelia)

The transformation experience of one woman in the workshop was particularly revealing

about the possibilities of using the TFCT process:

> There was a woman that day, she says "oh, no. Take care. We are in the United
> States; we cannot talk about Paulo Freire. He was a revolutionary." I was very
> upset, yes. Of course I did not say anything. But afterwards she was talking in
> very enthusiastic about it. But because she experienced the method. She didn't
> know all the methodology. She didn't know what we were talking about. And
> after that we were able to know, to know why she wasn't a revolutionary. [Laugh]
> She did not admit that she had, that she had sort of changed her viewpoint. We
> didn't talk about that because [laugh] she was very proud. We cannot say those
> things. But um, we see the difference. She was talking and she was enthusiastic.
> She was not negative. (Amelia)

Opportunities to use the TFCT skills to develop new perspectives included both

group and individual experiences both formal settings and informal ones. Njoki had an

opportunity to use a code and analytic questions in the context of one of her classes on

development. She told me that during a session dealing with approaches to development

she was able to introduce TFCT methodologies into the discussion in a way that helped

the discussion go beyond the stereotyped "Western perspectives". The class included

students both from United States and from African countries and represented several

different departments. She explained in detail what happened.

> So then my group and I., we created a code on -- -- well, we like to call it a code, because we just used the pictures of the different extremes of Africa, you know with all of the industrialization, to all the poverty, to all the famine and areas of abandoned kind of thing. So then there was a case study on the key issue that had been identified by the article about hunger in Africa. So we gave the group the article to read. We had two people arguing saying that the problem is leadership, and the other one is just saying that the problem is the policies. And so we showed them the pictures and then say: Where does this happen? How did it happen? ... To whom does it happen? And what could be the problem? And why is it a problem in the first place. And so even if they had ideas a lot of them came up with different factors that contribute to hunger and famine in Africa and how its address, as well as the link between.. some people would -- -- We put them into two groups. So one group identified that the key issue was -- that I can't remember what they came up with. But for one of them they found hunger to be the central problem because of course it's a vicious cycle, hungry people can't dedicate time to studying, education, which can't pull them out of the situation. And some of them found links going back and forth. Some said the wars in Africa, you know, ethnic clashes tribal clashes with civil war's, and then that was because with the prior political situations, and that was connected to the international institutions for pulling strings from whoever had invested money. And so [it] just grew out of just the problem of an African child with malnutrition and probably dying too... this is the World Bank's policy of structural adjustment; you have to do this while on the other hand you have the hungry person. So it's just interesting to see those links. We never of course got to the point where we came up with an action so because this was just a class presentation we just... enter part of it. (Njoki)

Morgan recounted the details of another opportunity that she had to create a code

on-the-spot during a private conversation with another tenant in the housing complex

where she lived. She said that the tenant had been contentious during discussions among

members of the complex. The code opened up some new possibilities for discussion and

new perspectives for the tenant. Morgan used a picture and analytic questions to enable

the tenant to see herself and the issues of the complex in a new light.

> And while we were talking, I drew a code of her situation and it was, I just thought of it, like, on the spur of the moment. And it was a picture of our building with flames coming out of the window and stick figures. And off to one side is a woman who's kind of, sounds are coming out of her mouth. And everyone's looking the other way. She can see the burning building and they are looking the other way and not paying any attention to her. And so, I just, I just showed her that picture and it completely changed our conversation. And I said, "What do you see?" And she said, "Well" here was the funny thing, she said, "I see there are no doors on the building." Well I hadn't even drawn that on purpose. But she had a big thing about security. So she really picked that up. So, anyway, then what, she recognized that that was her out here trying to warn us about the building and nobody was listening to her. So, I was so excited about that because we, in fact, one thing that slowed down the community building in our building is this one woman who, by the way right now is involved in a lawsuit against us. So what I had this breakthrough moment. And I thought, this way of coming to consensus or understanding a problem is so powerful. (Morgan)

Finding 2 .3 Three women used different tools within the methodology to help create situations of comfort, safety and mutual respect that encouraged a mutual learning context.

Another important aspect of Freirean methodology is that the process of learning

is one of mutuality in which everyone teaches and everyone learns. As discussed earlier

in finding 1.1 this insight was one of the important learnings identified by our research

participants. Three women: Maria José, Eleanor and Morgan, shared experiences in

which they use different tools within the methodology to help create situations of

comfort, safety and mutual respect that enhanced the mutual learning context.

Maria José, a non-Spanish-speaking woman working in a largely Spanish-

speaking context, observed that women in her community are reluctant to speak openly.

She determined that her first task was to try and make everyone feel comfortable. When

asked how she accomplished this she said:

> I've been listening. I'm allowing them to express what they need from this group.
> I'm not telling them that you should do this. I'm allowing them to, for all of us
> together for one. . I told them first thing was to make, to feel comfortable...We are
> working together. And I really allowed them to talk. And I was listening to them,
> you know. I allowed them to show me, to show the group, how you can go about
> it, you know. You tell them that you know this group is going to be like this, this
> and this. What is the best way for this group to work together? (Maria José)

Eleanor, who was teaching first-year Finnish at the time of our interview,

found an opportunity to incorporate the philosophy of the TFCT methodology into her

teaching practice. She explained that she sought "to be more of a facilitator than a

teacher".

> And I tried to build a sense of community amongst the students so that they use
> the language to learn about each other. And I have the same students for the
> course of a year. So that's very effective because they become friends with each
> other and they studied together. And they start to care about each other, which I
> think is a very important part of the methodology that you build community and
> then, you know, um, and then from there you can start teaching other things.
> (Eleanor)

Her evidence of the effectiveness of her strategy was in the positive reviews that she

received from students.

So, you have, you know, there's a real sense that the students have understood that, and you know, I want to see them as people, and I want to honor their own perspectives. And when they write that on their reviews I see then that I have indeed accomplished that you know, those handwritten parts that come. (Eleanor)

Morgan was also involved with a group working on issues of ecology. She saw an opportunity to use personal storytelling as a way to open the group up to the possibilities of transformation.

And, um, they are just ready to begin a storytelling research project. Where people are going to tell how they happened to come to the place where they are living sustainably and establishing their relationship with nature, you know. And I'm kind of coordinating that project. We want to see if our programming is really effective. So that we are giving people the opportunities that will help them make changes in their lives. So, that group also has conversations the first Friday of every month that are deliberately designed to involve everybody that's there. (Morgan)

Finding 2.4 Interviewees used facilitation skills learned in the training to enrich their work and add to its success.

As we learned in Finding 1.2 interviewees identified areas of personal transformation as a result of their participation in the TFCT training - changes in their own educational understanding and practice. Their reports of how they use the training highlighted their own practice as facilitators. These practices included: creating and using agendas, styles of relating to group members, recognition and negotiation of issues of trust and clarifying expectations.

The flow and process of a meeting can help establish relationships between a facilitator and the group. Agendas can concentrate power and stifle the flow of ideas.

Following the training April decided to substitute the presence of a big board and markers

for an agenda. She felt the change would make it easier to have discussions that reflected

the wishes of the group. Although her ongoing position of leadership in the group meant

that the group did not necessarily perceive these changes.

> I don't remember many people noticing, actually. It was a bit strange. Because it
> still ended up being a meeting mostly directed by us simply because we had done
> such a poor job of establishing the community to begin with that we were already
> so in charge that nobody else knew what was going on enough to take over. I felt
> like to the extent we could we were working from what the group wanted but I
> think as you mentioned it was a different scenario from that of the model. (April)

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> April recounted more positive experiences as a facilitator of workshops on media

violence. In these instances her leadership style used videos (codes) etc. as discussion

starters while she limited her role to encouraging the sharing of experiences on issues of

media violence, a strategy that proved effective.

> We had the best conversations because I really stopped trying to give a lot of
> information. I put a lot more emphasis on people bringing up what their
> experiences were on issues of media violence. I still showed the videos etc. but
> they were good discussion starters or concluding things to run out but helped, I
> remembered that change in all the way I did things….
> I went to United Way meeting in another town and the director of the United Way
> had seen and was interested and wanted her board to know about it. And so she
> said, "We don't have a lot of time, I just want you to come and show that video." I
> showed the video and the discussion started and so she said: "Well, we'll spend
> the rest of the meeting talking about this." I just stood there and every once in a
> while someone would ask me a question but it just went around the room and
> from there they decided. It was a lot of me going in and then leaving out. I didn't
> stay in a lot of places but that was one of the issues that we started to work on. So
> all it was introducing the discussion in a way that people could use it. (April)

Using the methodology can become second nature as a style of leadership to be

exercised in every context. Morgan reflected this reality as she assessed her efforts:

> Yes, and, you know, and in that regard I think I have used it more than I'm
> reporting to you. Just because I haven't set up a deliberate program to do the
> whole thing doesn't mean I haven't used aspects of it in all of these groups. For
> example, to have a go around so that everyone gets to say something early in the
> program, so they don't have experts versus observers. (Morgan)

Gabi's expanded on how the methodology encourages a facilitator to take

seriously both internal and external factors. The importance of paying attention to

external factors like issues of accessibility: location, childcare, safety etc. are elements

that can affect the success of the user of the methodology.

> Some things I already knew, of course, but others I developed further and others
> I've been able to perfect. The point about having childcare during meetings,
> having meetings in accessible places -- this was basic for me, this was new -- I'm
> being really honest. That the meeting be held at a place that's accessible for cars
> but also for people who don't drive, who will be coming by bus, that the meeting
> not be too late at night or in a place that's not well lighted. To think of these
> factors that can affect the success of my meeting was something fabulous,
> definitely. So, I think that putting together all of these factors have been very
> positive because I get a better response. (Gabi)

Paying attention to the feelings of the group, taking pains to show respect for their

ideas, making a safe place for them to say what they need to say without fear of judgment

or criticism proved to be all important skills for her work as a facilitator Gabi said.

> Now, depending upon what type of meeting I'm doing, I think it has worked better
> when -- to see the changes in people one is -- you know, that simple things like
> when I do brainstorming on any topic, to describe on the blackboard or what is
> visible from the very words that the people said -- I feel a level of satisfaction in
> the people. Perhaps I can paraphrase or ask questions to clarify a point that
> they've made so that it's not confusing, but to write it in their own words creates a

sense of pride, of having been hurt, that with these letters, " I was there, it doesn't matter what happened, I was there…"

Also when we're planning an activity like a garage sale, the idea comes from them instead of my proposing it. It builds a strong commitment on their part, because they want to feel pride, to feel the satisfaction of saying that their project worked. So in this sense I feel like I create a safe space in the sense of putting a few rules, well not rules, I call them agreements, at the start of each meeting we talk about agreements, like, for example, that …everyone's opinion is welcome and we aren't going to criticize it no one's going to express a bad opinion of another. I think this creates a safe space so that all feel more secure about participating. (Gabi)

Facilitation using the skills learned in the TFCT training can mean important lessons not just for those in the group but also for the facilitator and the facilitators organization. Gabi recounted one experience of her organizing work with a new cooperative that taught her some important lessons of what was necessary for successful organizing and maybe change in the way in which her organization approaches potential new groups to be involved. Gabi explained to us that she was visiting with a new community that had not had previous contact with their work. The group had had fewer opportunities for education and training. The group was immediately distrustful of Gabi as an organizer and the organization that she represented. Gabi began her usual presentation and she could see that the group was apathetic to what she was saying. She feared that her organizing would not be successful. Once again the value of using the generative theme process was demonstrated.

So I decided to leave my "blah blah blah" aside, what I had brought in writing, and I wanted to know -- I opened up the generative theme. I wanted them to tell me about their community, about themselves. I put up for questions on the chalkboard: What should I know if I was thinking of moving to that community? What would I find? That was one of the questions. Where could I go? What services would I find? And what were the most common agencies there are? And for me, it was really interesting, because after that is when they begin to participate and they began to show… to recognize everything that isn't in the

community. So they told me they didn't tell me where there was a hospital, but they said "We don't have good hospitals. If you came here and your child got sick, you would have no place to take them. You have to go to the closest neighboring town." So, almost as a complaint for them, without realizing it, they began to pull out all the frustrations, all the needs, all of the fears that they had. And among those fears surface the issue of why they weren't engaging with me. It was the lack of faith in community organizations. They didn't feel close to any organization and they had no ties or trust of any organization in the community. So imagine, if they had no ties to any establishment they are, how were they going to have them with someone who only arrived to give them a "blah, blah, blah". For me it was so for me that was what opened understanding. Okay, so here, concretely, there was a lack of trust. They didn't say it in so many words, but that was the conclusion. So I spoke some about where we are located. I gave the information they could verify in the Yellow Pages. I told them what other organizations we worked with. I began my new blah blah blah after the exercise, based on where they… how I could build trust… so, it wasn't that they weren't interested in the business, in cleaning, as I had thought in the beginning. It was simply that they didn't have faith, and with that generative theme I discovered that they (trust) was the principal argument. So now we include that in our presentation: Who is WAGES and how do we build trust? (Gabi)

While all the women had opportunities to use the methodology, their experiences also reflected the difficulties created by contextual realities. Responding to the question to identify barriers to the use of the methodology the women identified two major types of barriers. The barriers included issues around the intersection of identity, and barriers created by organizational mandate, culture and styles. The women reported both their dilemma about how to use the methodology to deal with these barriers but also some strategies for dealing with barriers.

Finding 2.5 Forty-five percent of interviewees identified barriers to the use of the methodology created by the intersection of identities such as race, ethnicity, class, language, gender, age and marital status in their contexts.

.   Being able to communicate is an essential ingredient in using the tools of Freirean

problem posing methodology. Two women were working in context in which Latinos

were the predominant cultural group but other groups were present as well. In these

situations the issue of language and the ability to understand discussions along with a

subtext of cultural differences created barriers for the use of the methodology. Gabriella

volunteers with a parents education organization that includes both Latinos and African-

Americans. She explained that although they make every attempt for all to be able to

understand their meetings, they find that the attendance by African-Americans is weaker.

She confessed that she does not exactly understand why the African-American attendance

is low.

> In general terms my race has made it easier for me, because right now, the
> majority of the group participating in the meetings are Latinos, and this generally
> makes it easier. We have a common culture and that's good. The difficulties are
> when the groups are mixed. Although we don't have the barrier of language,
> because all of our meetings are translated. So it doesn't matter if there are
> African Americans, Latinos. There's always translators. But in one sense
> ethnicity is a problem. I have the facility of speaking English as well, so I can
> communicate, invite people to meetings in English, tell them what the meetings
> are about, share information. I'm not that fluent, but my English has improved.
> In that sense, it has made it easier, though I don't have many African Americans
> in the general meetings. (Gabriella)

Diana who works with the union that includes members from several Spanish-

speaking countries as well as Haitians shared a similar experience. However Diane's

situation was further complicated because she was unable to determine which dynamic

was at work, whether it was just language/ethnicity or whether it was language/ethnicity

and also gender.

Okay, sometimes yes, sometimes yes, because as I said, there are people who are from Haiti. Sometimes, sometimes we have to translate for them, because they don't speak Spanish. Some of them don't speak Spanish, or don't understand very well, so most of the time they just listen, but they almost never want to participate, or perhaps they don't have the confidence yet to participate.

Maybe because I'm a woman, perhaps, I don't know…perhaps, it could be that, because in their race (culture) I don't know how this works for them, I don't know, but I do see that they don't participate much, they sit there, maybe they have a question and they keep the question to themselves. I see that they don't participate much and I still don't know why. I still haven't known why and we are going to have to… [Are these mostly men, or Haitian women as well?] Yes, men, men, men. Yes, because the women are more likely to participate, to ask questions, and regardless of race, equally, we are almost all Latina women, but the men, most of them are Guatemalan-only 2-3 are Haitian men. But yes… they come to the meetings but they are more reserved. We still don't know the reason for this. We're still in the midst of this. We don't know if it is because I am a woman, or why. It's probably because we are women, because we are two women there, or because of the language-we don't know which of those two factors yet. (Diana)

At another point in the interview she commented her inability to communicate directly meant that she was unable to really pinpoint the problem. She added however that the problem of poor understanding was not confined to the Haitians but also applied to Spanish speakers with varying levels of ability to understand Spanish, thereby involving cultural as well as language issues.

…because we have both Haitian women and men. So, because of language they don't understand very well. We have someone who speaks, who translates for them, but she is also Haitian, she's not exactly a professional translator, so I don't really know what she's saying to them (laughter). I don't speak Haitian, but I think there's a barrier there. Perhaps they don't really understand exactly what's being said. Perhaps she's communicating half of what was said, so there's an obstacle. But there is, we also have Mexican-American women who speak English and Spanish. They don't speak Spanish perfectly well, but, like they try to put up obstacles because they understand, they understand but not everything. So I don't know if we really have language problems, because we have all these cultures there at work, it's lots of cultures. We also have Guatemalans who don't speak Spanish—they speak a dialect, so we can't, really, we can't do much for

them…Indigenous, yes. And really, we don't have anyone who can translate that. So, most times, they don't come to the meetings. So we are really divided right now because of the language. The majority speak Spanish, but we do have other languages. I think this is also affecting us a bit more at this point….
Yes, because there are people who are all part of the "Hispanic family" but who really don't understand Spanish very well, and so we are divided by language (laughter). We need a translator of these languages (laughter) (Diana)

The difficulties arising from diversity of language and ethnicity are not limited to women working predominantly in a Latino context. Laquele's involvement with the group of white women in the community center also surfaced issues between immigrants and members of the majority white group. Laquelé asserts that she herself has never felt any difference between herself as a Hispanic and the US women. However she believes that the participation of Dominican and Puerto Rican women in the women's group is more difficult to achieve.

I think that for Dominicans or Puerto Ricans, I don't know, it occurs to me that it's harder for them to become integrated. That is, sometimes a Dominican or Puerto Rican woman comes [to the meeting] one time, but does not come back. I've seen in other places, I've heard Dominicans and Puerto Ricans say that they don't want to be part of this women's group, not with these Americans, because they always treat them…they talk about their (own) problems and don't' seem interested in what's happening with us. But personally for me, I can't say that about my own experience. I haven't felt that. (Laquelé)

Two women who were working in a context that would appear on the outside to be more homogeneous, that is contexts that involve only work with Latina women, issues of language, ethnicity, age and education also surface. Gabi was able to give several examples of the intersection of these identities and the problems that they cause as she tried to implement the methodology. She reported on how her effort to build an

atmosphere of safety and comfort in which all women would feel respected was

sometimes thwarted by the use of language, or conflicts that grew out of differing marital

status, and competitions between different nationalities.

> Okay, So there's nationality, and there's also age. And that's very curious, you know? Look, this is what happens-the majority is between 20-30 years old, okay? But of course I also have women who are 30-40 and 40-50. So immediately a woman (senora) who looks older than 35 is no longer called by name. They call her "*Señora*" or "*Doña.*" And then that person feels excluded from the group. Exactly. And the people are always saying, "Don't call me '*Doña*', simply call me Maria," and the group resists responding to her request by calling her by her name. So…exactly, it's cultural, but part of what we're trying to respect is how each person is going to feel comfortable. So the first day that each woman arrives at the training, I have an activity where everyone writes their name, as they want to be called. If their name is Guadalupe, but they want to be called Lupita, she'll write Lupitan. In legal terms she's Guadalupe, but for the group she will be Lupita. But getting them to respect this has been difficult. And that's at the level of age. Now there's also the level of education, that's another whole thing…
>
> …Depending on the state they came from (in Mexico), whether they come from Chihuahua or from the Federal District (Mexico City), right? So if you finished preparatory school and I didn't go to second grade, we're already different. So, there are differences at every level. It's difficult. Also, you know where there are differences? In civil status. If you are a single mother or you are married there's a difference. If you have children or you don't have children there's a difference. (Gabi)

The presence or the absence of children makes a difference and adds to the

complexity of the organizing effort. Women who do not have children are freer to work

more hours while those who have children may be resentful because they are unable to

earn as much. Gaby described their reaction: "How is it possible that they work more?

No, you can't give them more hours than you give me. It's not my fault that she has

nothing to do." So there are resentments, there's a difference. It's sad but there is."

Language use differences are also a way in which competition between nationalities is

expressed.

You've touched on a strong theme! (touched a nerve)…   Okay, the majority in the area where I work is Mexican. The second largest percentage is Central American and a small percentage is South American. But, to give you an idea, in each cooperative I have an average of 15-20 women, and let's say that of 15, 14 are Mexican, and one Central American. This is on average. So let's say that 1 in each ten might be Central American or South American. That's the tendency. So in that sense, there's a lot of competition, with simple things. For example I'll say, *"Vamos"* (Let's go) and they'll say, "Oh no, you have to say *'Orale'*, if you don't I don't understand you." (laughter)(Gabi)

Two women also raised the issue of the barriers created by class differences between facilitators and learners. In her response to the question about barriers to the use of the methodology Gabi noted that language can be a problem in another way. When there is a language gap that may be contributing to different levels of education problems can also arise.

So in this case, with the part of the orientation that we give to all our personnel, we used the popular vocabulary, right? Because someone could come to be a manager who's just graduated from Berkeley, but we need them to have two things. First, a connection with the Latino community -- and I don't just mean speaking Spanish. I mean that the "live the community" and within that, they don't use sophisticated words. Because if I tell them that I'm going to give the training and, let's see, technical marketing (*Mercadotechnica*) no one will come. They'll say, "What? Really? No, that scares me, I'm not going." So you have to have a handle on the vocabulary. (Gabi)

Morgan, a retired college professor, reflected on the same issue with regard to her own practice of popular education concluding that her language and her habits as an educator were in fact a barrier to her own ability to use the Freirean methodology. "I know that my own education, shall we say, and verbal ability has held me back with this

methodology [Laugh]. That there's some kind of, there's some kind of way that I haven't

overcome my own habits."

One other area in which identity issues presented a barrier for the interviewees

was that of gender. Eleanor and Njoki, the two women involving graduate studies, both

reflected on these issues. Eleanor pointed out the differences between teaching in a class

that included both men and women and teaching in classes that were predominantly

women. It was her experience that in the mixed gender classes men were more apt to

dominate the conversation and in spite of her efforts women were unlikely to be willing

to respond to any questions.

> But, I noticed that in some of my Finnish classes that I've had that the men tend to
> dominate and, if you know, they will ask the questions for the women. And some
> women just never ask anything at all. So you know I'm aware of that and then I
> tried to call on the other women to answer, to ask any questions. But sometimes
> you know there is shyness and they are.. that becomes a little tricky. (Eleanor)

She also commented on how difference and diversity came up in her classes that

were predominantly female. It was her view that people of different backgrounds - racial,

ethnic, sexual orientation -- were likely to feel marginalized or silenced if the classroom

where materials did not reflect their perspectives. She spoke of developing a strategy to

overcome this dilemma.

> And I've thought about that in terms of, you know, just the materials that I have
> for teaching Finnish. You know if you look at the dialogs in the stories in the
> book, you know, it's always about a heterosexual family with two kids and a dog.
> And, um, you know that doesn't really speak to the reality of Finnish families.
> You know there are different minority groups in Finland too. And last year I had a
> woman who was a lesbian in the class so then I worked create exercises where
> there were people of, you know, sexual, and different sexual orientation, you

know, living in families together. So then I tried to bring that out in my own exercises and speak to the diversity that exists in Finland too. (Eleanor)

Thinking about the realities of her home country of Kenya, Njoki commented on the need to take into account the differences in the perspective on the role of women in culture and Western countries and in her own country. She believes that it will be important to take into account both the role of patriarchy in her society and the African women's perspective which places care of family at the top of her priority list:

> .. If I were to go into a community and try to work a situation out, I definitely know based upon the way we've had a patriarchal society, there's no way a man is going to sit and listen to me saying so much about studying or helping women kind of thing…. And then the one thing they [outside researchers] did not factor into this situation was that the woman in looking after her family, that was her sense of achievement…. 'As long as my husband is fed and my kids are fed and clothed I know I've done my job'…. But in the one aspect that they seem to miss out of the whole story was that there is also a woman's sense of achievement that's very different for the African woman that it is for the woman in a Western country. (Njoki)

Diana also commented on the differences in using the methodology in the women- only group and in her work environment that included both sexes. In the women only environments she felt that although they had different problems all shared the reality of being victims yet felt a freedom to speak. In contrast, in the mixed groups women were reluctant speak.

> Well, in the group that is all women, frequently there is something more they are than feelings, all the time. In the women's support group we are only women and it is a place of victims. So all the time for talks or conversations that we have had, each one of us has different problems, but it ends up being the same -- we are victims. In the group we all participate. The majority, almost all of us participate, because as women, since we have the same [sentiment] feelings about things, I think that in that context it's more intense. Where I work, it's men and women, it's both, but they are, isn't much participation because I don't know, sometimes it's

hard to ask things, or we think, "What are they going to say if I asked the question?" They still have this; I don't know how to say it, this shame or this -- because maybe, because both sexes are there, men and women, maybe that's why they don't open up much to speak. Yes it's a little different. There's more reaction, or participation when it's just us women. (Diana)

Finding 2.6 Organizational cultures and expectations created barriers to the use of the methodology

Two women's comments addressed barriers that arose from organizational culture issues or expectations within organizations.   In April's work she did not have direct access to the women victims of violence that her organization sought to assist. Her work involved working with the staff of community organizations that worked more directly with victims. She felt that this made it difficult to use the tools of the methodology because the interests of the organizations were diverse.

> "So my job was to be part of helping other people do the work. And you can take that in a couple of ways but we were told to work with existing organizations in the community, which I think may be difficult because everyone had their own fractured interests and so the types of generative themes that we could look for were very different. They were so removed from the sources of the problem that it made it difficult. But the idea was to change that. How that was going to happen with the idea of community meetings, all the basic ways to try to tap into what's going on in a community…. (April)

April also found also that when she attempted to change the style of the meetings to a more open format to encourage broader discussion, her colleagues interpreted the open process as her failure to be prepared for the discussion and therefore failure of her leadership rather than recognition of a more open style of leadership. (Field Notes)

Morgan's work as a volunteer/activist with organizations in the community led her to comments on the conflict between the style of decision-making of those organizations

and the style of decision-making that is inherent in the TFCT methodology. She made

two observations about the neighborhood school committee that she served on. In her

view the schools committee carries out decision-making in the context of an urgency that

made it impossible to develop a more collaborative open process. "I cannot figure out

how to turn this, this methodology around so it will be useful to for parents and schools,

in getting people together.", Morgan said. The rush to decision-making was perhaps also

a function of the leadership of the group. According to Morgan, another frustration

stemmed from the fact that the Board of Education representative chaired the meetings

and controlled the agenda. The philosophy of the group seemed to be who can exercise

the most power in order to promote their particular agenda. "But the modus operandi

seems to be two, to exert pressure on the Board of Education through letters, phone calls,

educational forums and all of this to get our point across. And that isn't in the Training

for Transformation spirit of things, whatsoever. But it's more typical of how decisions in

bureaucracies are made." Morgan commented.

Finding 2.7 Two participants devised interesting ways to handle situations of barriers created by the conflict of identities.

The interviews revealed two interesting examples of how trainees thought about

and handled obstacles to use of the TFCT principles and methodology around issues of

gender and contexts in which it was necessary to deal with men and women. The

fundamental principles of the methodology which emphasize mutuality of respect for

different perspectives proved valuable in dealing with difficult situations.

While Njoki has not had a chance to try out the methodology in her home country of

Kenya she was clear about the kinds of steps that would need to be taken in order to be

able to assist women while respecting cultural values and norms.

> So I think that if the methodology were to be used that I would have to take into account just different ways of understanding from both genders and try to anticipate what conflict there would be or what kind of areas of strengthening there would be… and I think in that case it would be important to address both sides of it, and that's why the mixed group with the able to help because the men would have their own ideas of the issues and the women would have their own ideas of the issues, and just to kind of make sure that they are kind of working with the understanding of what the other side is thinking. So even if the solution (can't come) from a one-sided perspective where the women decide that they want to start probably a cooperative to be able to work there plans to sell them, at least the men are kind of in the loop of it so that you are not seeing your woman as "Oh, she's trying to get all this money and leave" You know the kind of issues you probably have to deal with, probably have to listen to what those would be. But just making sure that you are listening to all sides of the stories of all the people who are living within the context. (Njoki)

Gabi related her actions when the husband of one of the interested women came to her

one of her initial sessions. She used methodology principles to allay his fears about the

involvement of his wife in the organization and at the same time to maintain a safe space

for women to participate in the discussion.

> … Something interesting … is that I work only with women, okay? But this has happened to me at two different levels -- sometimes when it's the first meeting the women can come along -- they have to bring their partners/spouses. And when there is a man in the room, it doesn't matter if there are 20 women, the dynamic changes completely. They don't express an opinion, they're quiet, and of course the wife is quiet -- the one whose spouse is there. It's as if she didn't exist, as if she weren't there… I've decided to have the meetings, when a man comes and it's my work, I have a separate meeting with that couple, so that he is informed and motivated. But I ask him to leave, without making him feel like he's superfluous, but if not, the group does not respond. And when this happens in the school, we separate the men on one side and the women on the other, so that we can hear the feminine voice. It's sad to recognize this, but I think I've learned to accept that

things are this way and I'm not going to be able to change it, but that I do techniques to enable women to be able to speak…. I think that it's a question of making them feel respected, of answering their questions up front. Making him feel that I really appreciate that he is fair and that if he has any questions in the future I'm always going to be there to answer them, but respecting that we are going to do business with women, I am going to initiate a group and I tell him that he is invited to participate (talk) with me later, but that I need to begin a session with the women. I tell him that the only thing I'm going to do with the women is to share and develop what I've already explained to him. So he says, "No, no, no, then I'll go. I have a lot of things to do and I'll come for her later." I think it's a question of getting to their place of pride, giving them importance. (Gabi)

Finding 3 Impact: Contextual impact in US contexts was constrained by the diversity of organizational mandates and cultures, diversity of receptiveness levels of learners and constraints within the methodology, as learned, to deal with diversities.

The third and final dimension of the research findings report participants' views of the effect that using the methodology had on their organizations and the communities in which they live. Vella identifies Impact as "What happens in an organization or to a person over time as a result of a particular educational event." (Vella, et. al., 1998 p.108) She explains that the focus shifts away from the learner's actions which we looked at under Transfer to the organization and the community context where change is occurring in order to look for improvements in the functioning and performance of the organization (Vella et. al, 1998).   Understanding Impact requires looking at the dynamic relationship between the use of the methodology, changes in the functioning of the organization and changes in the broader context of the community and social justice arenas. Vella suggests that evidence of Impact can be found in the organization's use of concepts and principles of popular education, and changes in the organizational culture.

Although not specifically raised by Vella, in light of TFCT program goals Impact should

also include the effect of changes in the organization's social justice goals and strategies.

It is useful to point out here again the transfer him or not distinctly separate processes that

are interconnected. The distinction made here only for the purpose of looking at the same

phenomena from a different perspective.

All of the women interviewed were successful in finding one or more

opportunities to use the methodology and reported changes that occurred, within the

organization, within their vision of the potential for change in the organization and/or in

the broader society.

Finding 3.1 Four women linked use of the methodology to successes in the

social justice efforts of their organization or changes in organizational

culture.

The vision of the Grail organizers was for trainees to return to their own contexts

to use a more people-sensitive model of community organizing that would be able to

change the face of community development work and its outcomes. Gabriella and Diana

are two immigrant women organizing in very different contexts but both are working

with predominately Latino population in multi-ethnic environments. These organizations

have clearly defined social justice goals. When asked about changes they had seen, both

of them reported the role of the methodology in achieving their goals.

Gabriella's Parents Committee had several important victories in the year preceding the

interview. The parents were able to convince the authorities that there was violence in

the community and that school security guards were needed. She explained the steps

taken by the organization to secure the victory:

> For example, last year we succeeded in getting a new security guard in the school, and that work was the fruit of meetings with the parents to see what the needs were. That meant we tripled the meetings. We worked to build consciousness among the parents—that the school didn't have a needed security guard. That meant that the parents had to make calls, attend meetings, meet with the school principal, collect signatures. In general, the rule is that there is one security guard per school. This is a school of 1000 elementary school kids. There were four entrances and five floors, and that couldn't be covered by one guard. We had to show that it's a community where there is violence. And we won! (Gabriella)

They were also successful in getting a playground constructed for their school and

moderating the resistance of the principal to their organization. Gabriella said that the

methodology made it possible for parents to expand their commitment to the tasks,

recognizing their own power and not seeing it as her job to carry out the work. Her

evidence of this increased commitment was that the organization expanded from five

persons to a minimum of 50 parents. She explained that they used codes learned in the

training to help parents express their own vision for the community. In what she

describes as a "positive" exercise "because of the drawing we did, the parents wanted to

have a clean community, a school where the children were happy, where the parents were

more responsible and committed. This was their vision, so that' kept them working for

this. Those that did the exercises are the ones who are hanging in and taking

responsibility." She reported that different codes helped the community come to other

important insights like: the responsibility of everyone to keep the community alive; how

not doing what is needed does not solve the problem but creates problems.

Diana was motivated to become an organizer on behalf of her union after the training. Because of working conditions in which workers were forced to work long hours with very few breaks and questioning dismissed, Diana and another woman co-worker built a mobilizing strategy around the idea of using these concerns that everyone felt strongly about – a generative theme. The results were a sense of solidarity among the workers that made possible an unprecedented action by workers followed by major concessions by the employers.

> …the bosses wanted to take away a break. We work 10 hours a day and the boss made changes in the schedule. Before it was 5 days of work and instead he made it four—four ten hour days to make 40 hours. So then he takes away a break and put on paper a new schedule, a new break time and everything. They were 2 breaks of 15 minutes, and he gave us a 10 hour shift with only one break of 15 minutes. It was too much work and no rest.
>
> Well, we already had a union, so we decided to stop everyone. We decided to stop everyone. The big boss wasn't there. The supervisor said she couldn't do anything. That he wrote the paper, he's the big boss, and we can't do anything. And we told her, you'll have to call the big boss, because if not, we won't work and we'll go home, because this can't be like this. So, when she saw that all of us had stopped work because as I said. If one stops, they tell her to go home, but if we all stop, because we are all a group, we are all the union, if we want something we have to protest together, no longer one or two, not letting them through two out, we are going to have to be united for all that we need. So, this girl (the supervisor) talked with the employers and told them what was happening, and I spoke with the people, and I told them, "Say whatever you say, but if you don't restore the break, we will not continue to work." So we were speaking as a group. At the same time we spoke with the union rep who was responsible for the contract and told them what was happening. So when the boss realized what going on he was called for them to take the paper off of the door. They took down the paper and corrected it—changed the time, and they gave us the two breaks we deserved. We should have a rest. (Diana)

Diana explained the meaning of the change this way:

> It's improved relationships. Before we were only workers, like anywhere else, but now, when they see what happened with this, they have more trust among

themselves. They know that if something happens, if there is some problem, they know we are going to resolve it. They have more confidence in themselves. They know that now, we aren't alone. No more… Because as I said, the union is not the person who came and offered us a union. The union is us. So, the people have confidence in themselves. (Diana)

After the completion of the training, Esperanza and Maria José worked together in the Catholic parish Clothes Project, a social service project to help needy persons within the community.   Overtime there were changes in the culture of the organization. The used tools like codes learned in the training to build relationships within the group. Responding to a question asking them to identify changes they had seen, both Esperanza and Maria José reported changes in the culture of the organization over time. Esperanza noted that respect for themselves individually and for others in the group had grown. They had learned to listen to each other. Their experience within the group helped them to gain a sense of independence and to grow working together as group within the community. Maria José's believes that these relationships are the result of the way they worked together with the women. She described her view of the changes from past to present.

> …I see changes…The oldest women were, they were not together at the beginning but now the group of women, they're all together. So, you know, hi today and that stuff. But now they're together, they do things together. They socialize and that's a big change. .. And they're still together, they're still working together in the Clothes. (Maria José)

Finding 3.2 Four women articulated a sharper vision of what the social justice and organizational impacts might be through the interaction of method, organization and context.

Interviewees were asked to identify the role that they thought the training for transformation might play in carrying forward their goal for the use of the methodology. Their ideas about the scope of possible impacts were necessarily broad and reflected their contexts. Their responses included an idealized vision of the process of change, other resources to be enlisted, and ways to broaden the scope of those involved. Morgan, who works with a variety of groups, articulated elements of a process that might be similar in all groups with an emphasis on a continuity of relationship building among diverse people.

> There would have been groups of mixed ability, or mixed backgrounds, or mixed educational levels. Both in my building here and in my community. In an ongoing set of experiences that would have met each other kind of heart to heart and made some changes. That would be my vision of it. And I, in both cases I have, the people are there, the issues are there. (Morgan)

Laquelé, from the perspective of her own immigrant identity also touched on the theme of the creative possibilities of expanding the populations to be served by the process through the use of the methodology. She noted that those doing projects in the community were not those who live in the community. In her vision the methodology could be helpful in making community work relevant to those living in the community:

> Well, I'd like to see us involved in the neighborhood where I used to live. I don't live there anymore, but part of my soul is there, no? I'd like to see us involve

them more. To be able to involve the community in the sense of, of commitment, of participation. Because many times we have tried to do things-there was a garden, a community garden in the neighborhood that's still there, but the people who work the garden aren't the people who live there. They come from other places. So how do we give more coherence to the neighborhood, to the community? So that the people know each other better and participate and do things together? (Laquelé)

Two women spoke of a strategy that would expand those knowledgeable in the methodology in order to achieve their change objectives. In both instances the women's vision seems to reflect the real organizers goal of training women to be community organizers who are prepared to prioritize community perspectives. Njoki's ultimate goal is to be work with university students in assistance to local communities. She sees the first step in this process involving providing students with a version of the TFCT training to provide them with tools for working in local communities.

I'd like to be a faculty member who facilitates that whole kind of process of critical thinking, problem solving. And a lot, I think would benefit from this kind of training like TFCT to have input through similar training before they embark on finding where they're doing community service and what they're thinking, how they're reflecting, what they're writing. So kind of journaling it and stuff like that…But you know something that's really happening and expect the same of them, to be able to link what they've learned in theory into real practice which they would kind of get the feel from engaging in community service—you know that takes into account a lot of the reflection activities and journaling as well as policy analysis, those kind of things. (Njoki)

April had a similar idea of how to make connections with the community in order to make an impact that would realize the goals of the methodology. She views the methodology as a community centered strategy for making change. But since her work was primarily with middle managers the first strategy she proposed ways was to lessen

the distance between their work and the community. Her vision could not be realized

because of lack of funding.

> Well, that change that I wanted to see happen was to work more directly with
> everyday people in the communities. What I was going to see happen was to
> work more directly with everyday people in the communities. I was going to train
> the Vistas that would go out, be a part of the training and we wanted that to be
> directed to real grassroots stuff. (April)

Finding 3.3 For a majority of the interviewees (9 of 11) barriers to using the methodology fell into three broad categories: (1) organizational/contextual culture, (2) the learners and (3) the constraints imposed by the methodology itself.

Organizational styles of work proved to be a major obstacle in the path of positive

impacts for the use of the methodology. For two women the barriers were a very specific

organizational social change mandate that prevented a broad approach to community

problems as foreseen in Freirean theory. Gabi's organization's mandate is to build

cooperatives that do ecological cleaning. The ways that she can use the methodology

must always be within the parameters of that task. This necessity is in conflict with her

understanding of the broad possibilities that the methodology offers for communities to

name their own realities and pursue strategies to remedy problems.

> I think the only big difference that I experienced is that I learned from
> Maryann [TFCT training facilitator] how to come to work with communities for
> them to discover their own ideas or what they would like to do to grow, to
> develop etc. For me, in this part, the complication is that my organization has a
> very specific focus. We are already an organization with a defined purpose. We
> have defined our way of working, our goals, how to grow, we are an organization
> that helps low income women to achieve economics ability. So, in this sense… --
> now it's not about whether they want to learn to cook, whether they want to create
> a school for people to learn to read and write proper Spanish -- because we're

already defined. This is something we have defined as an organization…. So within this concept I can't come into communities and begin to open a space regarding what they want to do, and this has been a conflict for me, because I love the idea, but I am also very aware that we have discovered a very good business, a very good strategy, that creates jobs which is accepted by the client and which fills a need not only for the members but also for the clients to whom we provide this service. So that part has been frustrating for me, because one of my primary roles in recruitment -- outreach and community, I arrived and after that training I can't open any business that they would like -- it hasn't been easy for me. Right? To arrive to impose our own idea has been difficult. However I have used the tools to our advantage once we have the business up and running, to enable them to personalize it. In that way it has been useful, but at the level of what the community wants, no. (Gabi)

Gabi also noted that the process of the methodology assumes unlimited time to build relationships that are essential for the group to begin to work toward change. However in her work as an organizer she has to choose which topics that are of interest to the group there is time to work on and which ones simply must be abandoned.

Look, the fact is that we try, in the big issues, those that caused the biggest problems from day to day, but the truth is that in the little time we have to build a group, it's really hard to have a successful business. So there are certain things we work really hard and there are others we do know of. There are other topics that we work on with two or three people that are the most important on a particular topic. But in my ideal world it would be ideal to take up the topic with the entire group. (Gabi)

April pointed out that organizational constraints can also include issues of funding and accountability which would need to be worked out for the methodology could be made operational.

I think the key issue here is: where are you working? I felt like a lot of the work that I would have had to do with my last job was all organizational…. And it seems like America so much of what we have is organizations…. Because does the organization to give the funding that way without any ties? That is not going to happen. How do you give the manpower to be available but yet not intrusive?

Without the things an organization needs like deadlines or employees structures. How the employees are supposed to be useful in those structures as well… What is my boss going to say? Or my grant funding requires that I do this? Those are the things that people have to deal with the gotten through before they could get to the work of the model and the community and stuff. (April)

Organizational parameters can also affect the amount of time that is available for using the methodology. Njoki, Amelia and Laquelé identified this problem. An organization like a University is controlled by timetables for students study and activities. Recalling her own theory and how her own University community service class schedule failed to provide sufficient time for deep reflection as called for in Freirean practice. In looking ahead to her work with students in which she hopes to involve them in community service learning Njoki   recognized the problem that might lie ahead.

Because I know probably three of them [universities in Kenya] now that actually I'm aware of have a component of community service as a part of their requirements for completing your degree. So that kind of school that I went to it wasn't really struck. In that we only met twice and the first time you met to say where you work doing your community service. The second time you met to say how it was going. The third time you just met you in your report. But in between there was a lot of -- I'm sure service I think almost 120 hours if I remember correctly. But you are just left like what every your thought on services are or what every you been thinking or your reflections of your experience. There was no way of catching that and finding out if it's been a useful experience, if it's something that really make you any more if it was just good to work with and who brings what strength and the kind of organization that. So just a way of having that has a class where students do not just to go out and do service and come back and write a final report. But you know really think critically about what are the policies that we have, why is there this amount of poverty, who's contributing to what? Who can bring what resources into a solution to this. So you can get students thinking more critically and identifying ways of problem solving. (Njoki)

An organization's cultural strictures do not just apply to long-term issues, they can present a barrier to work on the methodology even in the short term. Laquelé and

Amelia discovered this in connection with their plan to present a small version of the training to the women's group at the community center. They found that the time for doing the training was limited to two or three hours because of the amount of time that the women's group makes available for presentations during their meetings.

Organizational practices or cultures often deeply embed a particular way of working that can pose serious barrier to the efforts of a facilitator to use the methodology to work on important issues and to open up a group's process. Eleanor is clear that her way of using the methodology is to be a teacher who encourages the kind of interactions that lead to transformation in the classroom. However, Eleanor found that in the university context teaching excellence takes second place to academic visibility gained through publication of research and scholarly material.

> Yes, because I think what discourages me most of all, … is you know, publish or perish…. But there's so much emphasis on research and publication. I mean, that's where 95% of the emphasis seems to be. And, and there's just not much respect given to, you know, teaching and being a good teacher and trying to transform your students and so forth. So, and that's more important to me than being you know, a good researcher and publishing. So, so I don't really know yet if I will know how to balance those things. Or if I can find an institution of higher learning where I can really focus on teaching, which is what I want to do. So that's, that's going to be my challenge, I think.... At first it's a game. It's again a position and then to get tenure and then after that you can focus on teaching again. (Eleanor)

Long established patterns of relationship decision-making within organizations and unconscious acceptance of those patterns can seriously militate against using the methodology within those contexts. Maria José commented on patterns for decision-making within the Catholic Church. In comments following our interview she said that

within the parish there was a tradition of top-down leadership that affected the way in which the women in her group related to her leadership. She explained that the women were used to being told what to do rather than making decisions for themselves. This made it difficult for her to establish herself as "just the coordinator" of the group rather than "the boss". (Field Notes)

Morgan also had observations about process decision-making that can be constrained by organizational culture patterns. She observed that in the group said she had been working with there was task orientation that seem to preclude any other way of working. She said it even affects her own way of working: "I always have these groups that have to get something done…. I think one of the things is just tradition, the way these groups have always done it. And my kind of going along with it…. So that's a factor."

Barriers to successful impact of use of the methodology can also come from within the group of learners. Barriers can be intentional like the resistance of particular members of the group to the methodology itself or from learners whose expectation of what they can accomplish through the methodology are unrealistic. A barrier can also be created when those involved in the process have different class orientation and social vulnerability than those envisioned by Freirean those who have taken up his educational theories. Freire's vision was focused on assistance to persons who are disadvantaged and are able to recognize and name that disadvantage. If no disadvantage exists or if a group is unable to acknowledge this disadvantage it would seem to make it difficult to use the methodology.

Diana found in her organizing work that there were two women who simply resisted her efforts to use the methodology. They seemed determined to misunderstand and to sabotage the process of the group's problem-solving.

> Yes, because there are people who don't speak fluent Spanish but we know that they understand, because we have known them for years. But they are trying not to listen. So if I read something, they interpret it in another way. Really they are people who instead of helping to resolve the problem, they try to make it more complicated… because always in a group if we are united and trying to solve the problem, there is one negative person who tries to twist the problem…. We have two women they are who, I don't know what's up with them, but when we propose something or talk about something they tried to make it negative. (Diana)

Diana said she wanted to use the methodology to facilitate a problem-solving discussion but these women seem to be interested in creating obstacles and influencing others to debate the discussion.   Diana added that it would've been helpful in the training to have some discussion about how to work with people who want to block the process. Laquelé faced a similar problem in working with the leadership group composed of people from her own country. She attributed the problem to the history of the functioning of organizations in her own country in which the patterns of leadership were basically hierarchical. This meant that members of the group resisted her efforts to establish a greater equality among the members. She was in fact accused of trying to take over the group. It is ironic that those involved in this resistance were, like in Diana's group, women resisting women's leadership.

Both Diana and Gabi as organizers found that a barrier to the use of the methodology and its successful impact could also be rooted in the kinds of goals that

learners set for themselves. Both of them felt that the groups they were working with had

a tendency to set goals that were unrealistic. And they were uncertain about how to

handle the situation. It was important to them that the group has a sense of

accomplishment and confidence. But at the same time it would be important to avoid

establishing goals that might be impossible to achieve and lead to discouragement. Diana

said "Yes yes. In the workshop, it would have been helpful to practice how to set more

concrete goals, which can be achieved, step-by-step, not ones that they cannot achieve..."

She agreed that it would be useful to spend time learning how to set goals that could be

achieved in the medium term.

Gabi's experience was a variation on this situation and Diana's remarks above

with regard to a small number of individuals resisting or blocking the process. Gabi

reported that sometimes the goals of one or two individuals can be at odds with the goals

of the rest of the group and provide a barrier to the work of the group:

> I'm thinking… you know, in a group there's going to be a lot of opinions and
> each person thinks about their own goals, for their own benefit. Sometimes I
> don't know what to do when I have the majority pulling in one direction and 1 or
> 2 others frustrating every process. I have a few techniques—I try to talk with
> them separately. I try to find out what they're frustrated about, what is the aspect
> of this process that is wounding them, but I haven't always found the best way to
> help them join the group or leave, or to convey that, "OK, this isn't your project,
> you have to find a group that is with your ideas." But it's not easy to just come
> out and say that. (Gabi)

One of the problems often faced by organizers is how to get individuals to take

responsibility once collective decisions have been made. Freirean methodology is a cycle

of reflection/planning/action.   Gabi, as an organizer, faced with the following situation:

Suppose we end an excellent meeting with 40 projects -- ideas to improve the neighborhood lot, for example -- but community in whatever neighborhood. The part that's hardest for me is that while people feel proud to be there, proud that they participated in the effort and that they are they are to lend support, it's very hard to get them to take individual responsibility for certain projects we have planned. For example, they say, yes, yes let's go to the city government and get a permit to close the street and hold the carnival. Okay, who's going to go? Gabi: "no I can't do everything." But how to get them to take responsibility to do these individual activities in my community this has been really hard for me. (Gabi)

Other barriers to the successful use of the methodology or explain to be related to the problematic of attempting to use the methodology with non-poor, non-oppressed constituents. April and Morgan both working in contexts involving middle income constituencies. April's staff work with middle managers of diverse racial backgrounds revealed tensions between the methodology which in her view was designed for "oppressed" groups working at a village level and working with advocates and service providers for "oppressed" populations.

She added that the kind of listening that she had to do was not the kind that was called for in the training but one that had more to do with the bureaucratic issues that the organizations that she worked with were dealing with. She felt that in many ways the people that she worked with did not have time to listen to each other:

Because I think that what I have run into is not the type of listening to people's problems and people's pain but listening to people's bureaucratic scripts and that takes a different kind of patience. Because you come out of the training fired up and ready to do good work. And you feel like all messed up with the organization and the structure is just a waste of time and so you get frustrated with it. You don't realize that that is also an organization that needs to be healed and to learn better ways to operate. So that would be different. (April)

Morgan expressed doubt of the efficacy of using Freirean methodology with middle-class groups.   She commented: "And so now my other big thing is, I'm just not sure this works with groups that are not conscious of their oppression. I've been saying this from the beginning. In other words, middle-class people."

Finding 3 .4. Working as a team provides the opportunity for experiencing support needed to carry out the methodology.

In light of the earlier research project on Training for Community Transformation which looked at the role that might be played by a support group, this research undertook to explore whether interviewees were able to work in partnership and their assessment of what impact working in partnership might have on their ability to work with the methodology and to have an impact on their context. Interviewees were asked to respond to the question: Would ongoing support and problem solving with others using the methodology help you? Do you think would be helpful if you could work as a part of the team? Why or why not? Interviewees' responses fell into three broad categories: comments on the benefits of working as a team; comments on the value of training others within their organizations and contacts; and comments on ways in which the Grail as an organization might be able to provide ongoing support. All of those who replied to this question expressed support for the idea of having a partner within the organization or the possibility of ongoing support from others who were familiar with the methodology and could help in problem solving.

Many of the participants returned to contexts in which they were the only person who had experienced the training. Gabriella and Maria José were able to work with ongoing teams. As noted earlier Gabriella was part of a team in which all three persons had participated in the TFCT training. Maria José now works with a Grail member who had not been trained in the methodology although she initially worked in a team with Esperanza. Amelia and Laquelé had the opportunity to work together one time in presenting a mini training. Njoki and Morgan both had the opportunity to participate in one time get-togethers with other participants in the training.

Gabriella reported that their team - one staff education organizer and two parents - met twice. It was an opportunity for sharing and getting to know what each person was involved in. "It could be interesting even if we're organizing around different campaigns. The group hasn't come together. We could help each other more." (Gabriella) She did however have the opportunity to work as a part of the staff team and she believes that this really increase the support that the members of the team have for one another. Gabriella also found that their participation in the team had also been a source of her personal growth. She attributed this in part to the presence of the supervisor for the parents group who was a participant and a leader in the TFCT training. "So I have grown personally, the team has grown as has the team unity."

Morgan's experience of a team/support group was only a single occasion but it made a profound impression on her. Another trainee brought together several other trainees in the city in which they all lived for a luncheon less than a year after the training. The reason for the gathering was to help that trainee work through a particular

problem that she had for which she wanted feedback. They even used one of the TFCT

codes to work on the problem. Morgan's response was enthusiastic: "I thought it was a

wonderful exchange. And then we never did it again." Morgan said that she was

determined to contact this person again in order to create more opportunities for

exchange.

Njoki also had an opportunity to be involved with the group of women in

California who had been a part of the training. But she pointed out that because she

herself attended the training alone she found that she did not have enough in common

with the other women to really find it helpful as a supportive context.

> I think that was one I would say the big disadvantage that I had was that I
> came by myself, and although we did form a network, other people already had
> things that were going and nobody was in San Diego so everybody else, around
> the place, was doing something. So in terms of just the support for even starting
> something that was kind of difficult for me. (Njoki)

Amelia also had a positive experience in working together with Laquelé and the

women's group at the community center: "Yes, yes it was very good because beside we

were learning and, and trying to apply the methodology was very good because at the

same time people were watching us and you know it was kind of test. It was very good.

Yes."

Even those who had not had the opportunity to work as a part of the team

expressed their view that working with another person who was familiar with the

methodology would be very helpful. Njoki named three things that she thought might be

gained: opportunities to 'bounce ideas off' each other; to share challenges and develop

strategies for dealing with them; the mechanism of keeping each other disciplined within

the methodology. The partner she said would meet two very important characteristics:

they would need to have gone through the same training and they would need to be

involved in the same specific context. Njoki summed it up perhaps when she said: "So I

think it would be really important to have somebody, at the least one other person, who

knows how the process works and how important it is."

Amelia, reflecting on the reality of the community center neighborhood took a

very practical view of the reasons for the importance of the team. In her mind there were

a great many problems that needed to be dealt within the community and this was a task

for a team committed to ongoing involvement with community.

> Yes, it would be great because there are too many many problems, like health issues, it educational issues, language issues and violence and many many things. Self-esteem, many things that need to be worked on in that place for the women in the community… but there would need to be someone who was regularly there to work on that. (Amelia)

Finding 3.5 Interviewees believe that participation of other members of the organization in the training would increase motivation, ownership of the process and strengthen the organization's use of the methodology.

The desire to strengthen the knowledge and skills learned in the training was

expressed by every woman interviewed. The suggestions included additional training for

themselves, training of other people in their organization and additional sharing among

trainees and others. At the time of the interviews a second level training was in the

planning stages and everyone expressed an interest to be involved in that training or to be

able to benefit from what would be covered there. Unfortunately the Grail was unable to

get sufficient registrations to warrant holding the second level training.

While there was general agreement of the importance of the team there were also

reflections on who it would be most strategically useful to include in the training and how

their participation might affect the work of the organization and the use of the

methodology. Although participation in pairs was a TFCT goal, many of the women

involved in the training came as individuals. Grail documentary evidence that was

available did not reveal whether their organizations knew about their involvement in the

training and/or endorsed it. This is in contrast to the trainings organized by Hope and

Timmel in the US in which one of the requirements for participation was organizations

sending two persons to be trained. April agreed with their strategy: "Maybe someone

from the community… and then it had been someone with that much invested in the

organization. I think it is definitely a good thing to have two people from the organization

would definitely be helpful."

Laquelé believes that the training of one of the US members of the group would

make an important contribution. She described it this way:

> I think that it would have changed completely. I have suggested many times that
> someone -- an American, one of the American women, also do the training. It
> would have been not... it could be very useful if two of us got together (came to
> accord) and worked as a team. I think it would be a way to achieve… to use the
> methodology to help this group to grow. (Laquelé)

Gabi and her colleagues at WAGES had some definite ideas about involving

others in the training and also how a partnership with the Grail on training would be

beneficial to their organization. She explained her idea this way: "… That we offer the possibility for new people from my organization to receive the training would be incredibly beneficial… yes it would be fabulous and they would be very motivated… I believe that if it were somebody in a manager's role, totally definitely."

Gabi said that they work for 2 to 3 years to help a community establish a business and gain its own independence. An important part of that process is the development of skills in the members of the cooperative that will help ensure their success. Gabi believes that exposure to the TFCT training can be a part of that development of skills.   She confessed however that she did not feel ready to conduct the training herself but added that the organization saw a very important role for the Grail in giving the training because in their view training would be better received if it came from outside the organization rather than inside. "So in that sense it would be ideal for them to get it from you [the Grail]. It would strengthen my bases, they would learn new things, and they would have the opportunity to learn it more directly."

Morgan, a national leader in the Grail, was also thinking about how the Grail itself might be involved in follow-up and support of the trainees. She suggested sharing of experiences between Grail and even non-Grail members through the Grail publication and also at some of the regular meetings of Grail members.

> Yes. I think hearing other people's stories, other Grail members, or even not Grail members that are actually using this could be articles in *Gumbo* [the Grail newsletter] or it could be whenever we have a Grail meeting to have a gathering of those who have gone through this training to just share what we have been thinking about or trying out. That would be very good. (Morgan)

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented findings organized under the three broad categories –
Learning (Finding 1), Transfer (Finding 2), and Impact (Finding 3), as suggested by Vella
for assessment of a popular education initiative. The specific findings within each broad
category reflected information gained from responses to interview questions. Participant
views and insights are extensively reported in order to give the widest possible
understanding of the complexity of each situation and the uniqueness of each of the 11
women interviewed. These responses reflect both commonalities of experience,
particularly among women with similar identities as well as interesting contrasts of
experience. The findings are presented to reflect this diversity of experience rather than
as a quantitative report of the most frequent experiences. The participants own words are
used extensively because they are the most accurate way of portraying their experience
and honoring their wisdom which is central to the methodology of this research .
The findings about Learning - what participants learned during the training process
revealed that participants understood the goal of the training to be learning how to help
others help themselves. A majority of them revealed that the training made a dramatic
impact in their own lives increasing their self-confidence and self-esteem both in general
and with regard to their ability to carry out the methodology. They affirmed that the skills
of the methodology could make an important contribution to that task of helping others to
help themselves.

The findings about Transfer - how participants used what they learned in their
own context -- revealed that while all participants were able to use some aspect of the

methodology in their contexts they also encountered barriers related to issues of identity and organizational mandate and culture that complicated their use of the methodology. They reported that they were able to use the methodology to help their organizations gain new perspectives as well as helping the individuals within the organization feel a sense of safety and respect. Participants particularly commented on their use of tools particularly codes and generative themes learned in the methodology as valuable as to their work as facilitators. Forty-five percent identified the intersection of identities like race, ethnicity, gender and age as creating complications to their work for which the training did not necessarily give ready answers.

The findings about Impact - changes in the context of organizations and the broader society -- revealed that the social change goals of the training did not transfer easily into local contexts for many of those interviewed. Only four women made a linkage between their social justice or organizational culture goals and the use of the methodology. The majority of participants indicated that support for an expansion of those to be involved in the training could be an important ingredient in successful use of the methodology and enhancing its impact in their own context.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS

Introduction and Overview

"The progressive educator must always be moving in and out of his or her own reality, continually inventing me and reinventing what it means to be democratic in his or her own specific cultural and historical context."(Darder, 2002 p.v) This research has tried to discern the kinds of reinventions that may have been made by the Grail training and by the 11 women who participated in the TFCT training as they sought to apply Freirean theory and practice in their own context.

The strategy of this research has been to lift up the voices of 11 women who participated in the Training for Community Transformation three-part training program sponsored by the Grail in the United States. The training program was designed to help them learn the basic skills, attitudes, and understandings that are part of an approach to education for social change originally formulated by Paulo Freire and later systematized in *Training for Transformation* (Hope, et.al. 1984). It was hoped that their insights and experiences would shed light on the problems and possibilities for women using this educational strategy as a part of their work for community transformation. The group of women was diverse and the situations in which they were working had both similarities and differences and therefore their experiences cover a wide spectrum.

Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) suggest that qualitative research analysis be constructed by the creation of analytic categories based on the research question. The

goal of the analytic categories is to help to the researcher think about the connections between the research question and the findings of the study. With these categories established the analysis process involved seeking to determine the broader meaning of what actually happened within each of these categories and why and also why not, reflecting both on the specific findings of each category and popular education literature dealing with those issues (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2008) .

What do the post training experiences of eleven Training for Community Transformation participants tell us about the applicability of Freirean theory and methodology in women's leadership for community transformation in the United States? Earlier three elements of the research question were identified: Freirean theory and methodology, women's leadership and US contexts. These elements are parallel to the three lenses suggested by Vella for looking at a popular education event – Learning, Transfer and Impact. These also mirror the three categories of the Literature Review: Theory, Methodology and Practice and US Context. With this in mind the analysis was broken down into three analytic categories: Analytic Category1: Freirean theory and methodology -Learning – Freirean theory and methodologies can be useful for women's organizing especially among low income and immigrant communities. Analytic Category 2 – Women's Leadership - Transfer - The possibilities for women's leadership using Freirean inspired methodologies for community transformation are conditioned by interacting factors: their positionality and power within the organizational context; their abilities to deal with barriers created by differences in gender, race and ethnicity etc.; their capacity for personal change within those context. Analytic Category 3 – the US

context - Impact - The diversity of US contexts present major challenges for women's leadership for the work of community transformation using Freirean theory and methodologies.

Analytic category 1 – Learning - Freirean theory and methodology

What can Freirean theory and methodology contribute to assist women in their work toward social transformation? What happened? The experiences of eleven women using the methodologies showed that in their own communities they were able to use the methodology with varying degrees of success. According to their own accounts all the women felt a basic grounding in the fundamental elements of the methodology. All of the women identified the ways in which they expanded their own understandings of themselves as educators. There are four things that may explain why this was the outcome and why for some there were also complications. (1) There was a close resemblance of some of the US communities between the classic situations that popular education methodologies were designed to address, such as low income, economically disadvantaged communities. (2) The learning by doing experiential style of the training was successful in building leadership and confidence in leadership among the participants. (3) The goal of the achievement of the broad social justice objectives of classic Freirean theory was a problematic because of the training focus on "helping the community" but not sharply focused on justice goals. (4) The training made important connections between personal transformation and on organizational transformation but less clearly a connection to a larger political transformation agenda.

Close resemblance to the reality described by Paulo Freire.

As noted earlier, bell hooks once commented about reading Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* "I felt myself included." (hooks, 1993, p.150) Many of the 60 participants in the training and 8 of the 11 women interviewed were working in low income communities. One of the reasons why the participants were able to use the methodology successfully was that learning about the Freirean theories perspectives on how people in similar situations could work together to overcome their oppression was likely to resonate with the participant's own perspectives on the communities in which they live and work. In addition, the Latin American women, some of whom brought their knowledge of Freire to the training, may have felt an additional openness to the methodology given their history and the methodology's history in their own countries. At the same time by choosing to participate in the TFCT program the women had already acknowledged their interest in attaining skills in order to help their community and so they brought a readiness for acceptance to the training and its methodology. It follows then that other women in living in similar communities, coming from similar backgrounds and having similar commitments might also be ideally placed to be open to the use of Freirean methodologies. At the same time what is more problematic is the understanding of political and economic oppression that is central to Freirean theory. While oppression may have been a central category of the training, according to a member of the Grail Program Team, it was interpreted in a more generalized and personal way rather than as a part of a political analysis. In addition "oppression" was not a central part of the vocabulary of the participants' description of their situations where

they were working in contexts. So at that level their "successes" did not bear close resemblance to the realities in outcomes envisioned by Freire. (Field notes)

Experiential learning builds leadership.

Experiential learning appears to be a powerful instrument for training women to use Freirean methodologies. This learning had two outcomes: capability to use of the methodology and personal transformation for the women using it. It would appear from the interviewees experience to be attributable to the fact that personal transformation and facility in the use of the methodology are mutually reinforcing. Based upon their own experience and the tools they were able to carry with them (generic codes etc.), the trainees interviewed felt confident to go out and carry out the skills and strategies that they learned in the methodology. For some this confidence in how to use the methodology was a sign of a personal transformation. Using the methodology gave them confidence, in turn because they felt confident as leaders they could use the methodology. Feminist popular educators definitely identify personal transformation as a key element in the popular education process. "Community development begins with self-development". (Ellis, 1983 p.15)   The fact that they were able to participate in shaping the learning of the training also contributed to their confidence in the methodologies. That participation is exactly the kind of mutual process that is consistent with a Freirean view of problem-posing/dialogic education. A similar group of trainees coming from similar community situations, with similar commitments might have the same kind of positive response to experiential learning of Freirean methodologies as trainees who were

interviewed in this research. On the other hand not all persons are comfortable with experiential learning and the experience could lead to decreases in self-confidence.

Broad social justice objective problematic.

Social transformation is the end goal of Freirean methodology and is also of a goal of the Grail. But while Paulo Freire is explicit about overcoming political, economic and social oppression, the Grail TFCT invitation and training spoke in general terms about community transformation but did not link it to addressing larger systemic justice issues. The training's emphasis on "community transformation" may have been at the expense of the articulation of the Freirean idea of social transformation. This emphasis is reflected in participants' accounts of only narrowly focused community goals. So one reason for the lack of success, in the purest Freirean terms, was that the broader vision cannot be accomplished if it's not even articulated specifically. "Helping others help themselves" could be interpreted to include broad societal social justice goals, however the accounts given do not indicate that this has been the case. Therefore if broad social justice goals are in fact to become part of the social transformation process, more explicit ways of naming those goals and linking local strategies to broader objectives would need to be a central part of the training strategy.

Personal, organizational and political transformation.

The successful use of the methodology may have also been a result of linking by participants of personal, organizational and political transformation. The facilitator of the training did give emphasis to personal transformation interpreted through the lens of health and wholeness and made connection between health and changes that might occur

in their organizations as a result of the use of the methodology.(Field Notes) Freire does

not address these connections directly. Personal transformation is most often subsumed

within the concept of conscientization which is most often described as a collective

process. While Hope and Timmel (1985) are concerned with the dynamics within groups

and their role in the social change process, Freire does not focus on the role that

organizations play in the process toward social transformation. Because of the evidence

in this research study of the successful linking of personal and organizational

transformation with community social justice, similar linking might be affected in other

community contexts. If the linkage could be made by TCFT trainees the training may

then be an example of a reinvention of Freirean methodology.

Analytic category 2: Transfer -- women's leadership in context

The possibilities for women's leadership using Freirean-inspired methodologies

for community transformation are conditioned by three factors: their positionality and

power within the organizational context, their abilities to deal with barriers created by

differences of gender, race and ethnicity etc., their capacity for personal change within

those contexts.

How was women's leadership for social transformation in context enhanced? Can

the use of Freire-inspired educational methodologies play a role in transforming both

themselves and the contexts? What is happening? Operating in their own contexts

trainees exhibited strong understanding of themselves as leaders and facilitators. Race,

ethnicity, class and positionality were acknowledged as barriers and problems identified

and tackled in context. At the same time trainees identified the difficulty of knowing how

to use the methodology to help resolve conflicts and barriers created by differences in identity.

Positionality and power in organizational context.

Popular education methodologies can both help create an environment for women's leadership and enhance their positionality and power within the organizational context or a supportive organizational context can foster women's leadership. Some trainees experiences showed that if women's Freire-inspired leadership was operating within a supportive organizational context that had identified social justice concerns, and was open to a participatory approach to decision-making and that woman was in a position to give leadership to the direction of processes of the organization the methodologies had a good reception. This is the ideal type of moment or organization that popular educators have identified as one where all the conditions are present for a revolutionary potential. While on the other hand, as others discovered, if the organizational environment was one of hostility characterized by hierarchical patterns of decision-making and/or other organizational culture barriers that the Freirean trained facilitator had to fight against or convince those who control the process of the usefulness of Freirean methodology, the possibilities of successful use of the methodology were greatly diminished. This more hostile negative environment was not envisioned or discussed by either Freire or Hope and Timmel. Some trainees felt the need for more preparation in how to handle these situations.

Difference as barrier.

Leadership possibilities can be enhanced or diminished by issues of difference. The racial, ethnic, gender and class identities of members of the group and the educator/facilitator make a difference. What is happening? Many trainees found themselves in situations where difference of race, ethnicity etc. influenced the dynamics of personal relationships within their organizations and consequently responses to the methodology. For example participants faced with the cultural realities of *machismo* and patriarchy had to call on tools of the methodology to help them move the work of community transformation forward.

This happened because each woman's capacity to exercise leadership to deal with these identity realities reflected her own understanding of her own individual identity and the ways in which she could use her sensitivity to identity to shape and positively affect the use of the methodology in the learning environment. Feminist popular education makes this sensitivity to issues of difference a central part of the work of a feminist popular educator.

Leadership building and personal transformation.

The use of Freirean methodologies calls for educators to look at their own shortcomings and patterns of behavior that would jeopardize the process. To carry out the methodology requires the ability to change and that change can be limited to one element within the context or it can be a comprehensive life change. What happened? In their contexts trainees revealed that they had to face their own issues such as: need for control, lack of confidence in learners, feeling responsible for outcomes, unwillingness to listen to

others etc. They reported that the tools of the methodology like listening, codes, generative themes, and analytical questions helped them to make the personal transformation needed to become more effective leaders and facilitators.   One of the roles of the training can be to help uncover this range of change possibilities for each individual in addition to whatever changes are to be faced for the organization and the community. Feminist popular education literature often documents these kinds of personal changes within the popular education context although they are largely not documented in Freire's writings.

Analytic category three: Impact -- US contexts

The diversity of US contexts present major challenges for women's leadership in the work of community transformation in the US using Freirean theory and methodology.

How does US reality enhance or complicate the ability of women in the US to facilitate processes for change in organizations and community contexts through the use of Freire-inspired educational theory and methodologies?

What happened? Grail organizers deliberately recruited women from immigrant and low income communities because of their conviction of the importance of strengthening leadership skills within these communities. In addition, the Grail's choice of a facilitator for the training that was experienced in and sensitive to the particular perspectives of immigrant and low income women was an important part of the leadership development strategy. The experience of TFCT trainees showed that trainees adapted the methodologies that they learned to their more complex contexts honoring the

specific goals that the identity of their constituencies revealed rather than imposing a model of social change imported from another reality. Trainees worked with the realities of difference in their organization and in community contexts searching for ways to use the methodology to resolve conflicts. Grail organizers confirmed that the training took individual community contexts seriously but the accounts of the participants do not indicate that the training included a major analysis of the broader context of US realities in which these local realities fit or possible different types of contexts and therefore different challenges that might arise for the methodology. Grail organizers confirmed this. (Field Notes) Three aspects of US reality may have a particular effect on the ability to use Freire-inspired methodologies for social transformation in the US: community diversity, organizational diversity, and the multiple places of origin of social change.

Community diversity.

One of the challenges of US contexts is the heterogeneous nature of many low income and immigrant communities which means that the easy consensus in the community envisioned by classic Freirean theory is not necessarily possible. Racial, ethnic and cultural differences are obvious division points, along with class, especially in light of the history of racial and ethnic discrimination in the US. Political and social power differences intersect with all of the above. There are varying experiences of oppression, and understandings of oppression that may put community members in opposition to each other. Facundo pointed out that her experience attempting to use the methodology showed her that this complexity in the US means that the disadvantaged community that Freire described is not identical to the disadvantaged community of the

US. (Facundo, 1985) Use of the methodology requires, as the TFCT trainees showed, that it is necessary to discover how to shape the methodology in order to make it useful in the more complex contexts. Even though the situations on the surface look similar to the situations of disadvantage described by Freire it is necessary fully to understand each context of work.

Organizational diversity.

What happened? Participants found themselves in a variety of different kinds of organizations with different class identifications, with different mandates, with different social justice goals. They faced the challenge of how to use the methodology in this variety of contexts.

Persons and organizations in the US seeking to use a Freire-inspired methodology are not limited to organizations of the "oppressed". Those wishing to the use the methodology may be middle-class, like many Grail members, women seeking to be involved and supportive of processes of social transformation. The constituencies may be from more privileged middle-class groups, bureaucratic organizations, and social service oriented organizations that may have an interest in social transformation but not have it as a primary goal. Neither Freire nor the *Training for Transformation* manuals created models specifically that would deal with these other kinds of organizational realities. Although in the early 1990s Timmel did work with others to develop a methodology for using dialogic education to work with middle-class constituencies on US healthcare policy issues. Freire's original theory did not believe that such organizations could be originators of social transformation. A Freire-inspired practitioner in the US will need to

look at the specifics of their organizational context to determine the kind of organizational culture changes that may be needed as well as understanding what shifts in power are necessary in order to accomplish these changes.

In an effort to enhance transformation work using Freire-inspired methodologies the means of building power within an organization, may be dependent upon the organizer/educator developing a sufficient number of allies within the organization in order to move these goals forward. This may mean that it is critical that several persons within an organization be trained in the methodology and work as a team toward their goals. In this the ability of sympathetic organizations, like the Grail in the US, to be supportive of this task of building a power within organizations and sustaining learning in the methodology will be critical. The literature does not recount how such strategic team building might go forward.

Multiple locations for initiating social change.

Very few places in the US context conform to the ''village" community as a starting point for social change as envisioned in Freirean literature and the *Training for Transformation* manuals. In the US there are clearly many starting points for social change. Various visions of the process involve the creation of mass movements starting at the very local level that would have the capacity to overcome existing political and economic power structures. The models for change in the US are multiple and related to the identity of who is trying to make change. For example the process of social transformation for immigrant populations may include assimilation and learning to get along with the broader society rather than being in opposition to it. Organizations have

different interpretations of how social change is made. Some rely on power brokering through legislative process, some rely on public pressure, and some rely on mass protest. The possibility for use of Freirean educational methodologies will be different within each of these contexts.

Final Comment.

The answer to the question whether reinvention strategies by women can foster their leadership using Freire-inspired methodologies on behalf of social transformation in the US is possible seems to be affirmative. While the experience of the 11 women cannot be generalized, it is fair to say that if these very different women operating in some very different contexts can, based upon their own personal strength and the strength of the methodology, be able to adapt that methodology in order to work at varying levels on issues of social transformation in the US, it is an indication that such reinvention is not only possible but it is already happening.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter the goal has been to examine the implications of the findings of the research. The analytic categories reflect the ongoing use of the assessment lenses of: Learning, Transfer and Impact. The findings reveal, once again, the ways in which Learning, Transfer and Impact are deeply connected. The evidence of the usefulness of the methodology reveals how the places for Transfer of the methodology matter in the ability of the women trainees to realize the goals. At the same time the Findings reveal how the strength of their Learning of Freirean theory and methodology in the training helped them develop the confidence they need to use it in their organizational contexts.

The Findings revealed how the differences between the US contexts compared to those envisioned by Freire and other popular educators in other parts of the world, presented unique challenges for these women as they tried to use the methodology. The role played by differences of identity in their efforts was particularly revealing. Their ingenuity in reinventing Freirean strategies to fit their realities is important information for others seeking to apply Freire in the US. The Findings also revealed that the reinvention of Freire would need to include development of an understanding, peculiar to the US, of the multiplicity of social transformation strategies in the US and the variety of actors involved in those strategies and the roles that popular education methodologies might play in those processes.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This qualitative research project set out to answer the question: What do the experiences of 11 women participants in the Training for Community Transformation Program reveal about the applicability of Freirean theory and methodologies for women's leadership for social transformation in the United States. The strategy has been to document through their own voice the experiences and insights of the 11 women. Throughout this study the concepts of Learning, Transfer and Impact, have been used as a filter for the logical presentation of research findings and interpretation. Findings within these three broad categories were reported in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 an interpretation of the meaning of participant experiences and insights was presented. In this final chapter the goal is to go back to the beginning and look at the meaning of those findings for feminist popular educators and the popular education/social justice community in general and for the Grail in the US .

Conclusions

   Learning.

The first analytical category identified issues related to Learning: Freirean theory and methodologies can be useful for women's organizing, especially among low income and immigrant communities. Four contingent factors were identified: a close resemblance to the reality described by Freire, the role of experiential learning to build

leadership, the problematic of broad social justice objectives, and the interconnection of personal, organizational and political transformation. These insights lead to the conclusion that women's organizations, like the Grail, can use the training of women in Freirean methodology as a part of their broad goal to support women engaged in social transformation. The research brought to light that the evidence available was for only a narrow band of the kinds of organizing that are going on -- primarily organizing in low income communities. However, for this sector of organizing the outcomes of the experience of the 11 demonstrated the value of use of the methodology. Another interesting conclusion to be drawn is that although personal transformation of learners receives less emphasis in Freire's writing than social transformation, the experiences of 11 clearly demonstrate that personal transformation can be a byproduct of involvement with the Freirean process. This is perhaps one place where the experiences of the eleven women of the study reflect a reinvention of Freirean practice.

Transfer.

The second analytical category, Transfer, interpreted the findings of the women's leadership experiences in their own contexts and determined that the possibilities for women's leadership using Freire-inspired methodologies for community transformation are conditioned by interacting factors: personal identity, power and positionality in context, sensitivity to constituency, and ability to be self-critical and to adjust. This leads to the conclusion that training for women's leadership needs to give a balanced attention to each of these interacting factors as well as their interconnection. The Findings demonstrated how different levels of organizational buy-in to the use of the methodology,

different roles of participants within the organization, and diversity within the organization itself made considerable difference in the ability of the women trainees to use the methodology. Each of these interacting factors had the possibility of being a stumbling block for women's leadership and therefore their training needed to reflect sensitivity to all of these.

Impact.

The third analytical category touched on impacts in US contexts: the diversity of US contexts present major challenges for women's leadership in the work of community transformation in the US using Freirean-inspired theory and methodologies. Once again the result of this study leads to a conclusion about the nature of the training: the design of the training for women's leadership in community transformation needs to include a new articulation or a revision of Freirean theory and methodologies for use in the multiplicity of diverse US contexts -- personal, organizational, community and national. If the training is to be effective for women working at the community level in a variety of different ways, it is imperative that their training include time for learning the skills of organizational and community analysis that can be useful for their work. In particular, naming the specific subtexts in US culture such as racism and discrimination and their impact on individuals and organizations and communities can make an important contribution to the development of women's leadership.

Recommendations

In light of these conclusions it seems appropriate to make recommendations for action by the feminist popular education/popular education community and the Grail and also for further research.

Recommendations for feminist popular educators and others in the popular education community.

1. Organizations using and promoting popular education for women's leadership development and social transformation should re-examine training designed to ensure that training reflects the mutually reinforcing connection between personal transformation and social transformation organizing.

2. Organization should continue to promote and strengthen the use of popular education methodologies as a part of organizing strategies in a variety of communities that define themselves as disadvantaged such as economic political and social disadvantage, racial, ethnic, and gender etc. disadvantage.

3. Feminist popular educators planning popular education initiatives should include strategic analysis of organizational cultures and dynamics, history and attitudes toward women's leadership, demographics of constituencies involved as well as the benefits and liabilities of the impact that their own identities will have on popular education practice.

4. Organizations should expand the documentation of their efforts to use popular education methodologies and the outcomes and impacts of those

uses and then share that documentation with others in the popular education community.

5. One or more organizations could take advantage of the opportunity for using the Internet as a place to open an ongoing dialogue on the application of Freirean theory and methodology in the US, a dialog that would address both theoretical issues and practical concerns. Such an Internet conversation will fill the gap created because organizations have diminishing capacity to have such conversations face-to-face.

Recommendations for the Grail.

1. The Grail should sponsor internally and with others an ongoing online dialogue and exchange of information and resources on Training for Transformation and other popular education methodologies.

2. As a part of its ongoing exploration of transformation strategies, the Grail should continue to use the lenses of race, class and gender and how they impact the process of organizing for transformation.

3. The Grail should encourage the opening up dialogue and sharing on popular education in a small number of local communities where Grail members and others are using popular education through sponsorship of occasional face-to-face gatherings.

Recommendations for further research.

Researchers interested in popular education practice could focus attention on organizations using popular education strategies with middle-class constituencies to work on issues of social transformation at the community or national and global level. Documentation of the transformational impact of such work could be very useful in the US context because cross class strategies are an important part of social transformation work.

Personal Reflections

My personal starting point for this research effort was to have an opportunity to interrogate my own work as a popular educator by understanding the dynamics of the experiences of others seeking to use popular education strategies. With this regard the research project has been very rewarding. There have been some important new insights or, more accurately, re-learning of things sometimes lost in practice. For example, learning again that the personal, the organizational and the political are always connected, that the way in which personal relationships are formed and nurtured will have an important impact on any social justice goals that are being pursued. Also organizations have to learn how to operate differently internally if their external goals are to be realized. In this the wisdom of Freire about the task becoming human cannot be minimized.

At the same time the research project showed, for my own work, the serious drawback of not being able to follow up with a particular constituency the development

of new understandings and insights through the use of popular education strategies. Even as a researcher, I was frustrated not to be able to follow these women in their continuing efforts to use the methodology. Our conversations together were inspiring and stretched my thinking and I would have been grateful for more opportunities to discuss the use of the methodology and our common efforts to use it on behalf of social transformation.

The research lifted up the particular problematic of using the methodology with middle-class people and in middle-class contexts. Because my work is primarily in this area, the wisdom of the participants around this question was particularly helpful. This is one of the areas of work of reinvention that has not received the attention that it deserves. The insights I learned from participants about the organizational dynamics within middle class bureaucracies will be useful as I reexamine my own practice.

The transition from feminist popular educator to qualitative researcher was not an easy transition to make. The role of participant observer is not an easy role to play. However, for this kind of research into feminist popular education, it seems much better to be an insider to the process than merely an outside observer. I believe that my experience with the methodology was a distinct advantage for my participation in the qualitative research process. At the same time, the qualitative research process served as my participation in the reflection cycle of Freire's action and reflection praxis process. Viewing the work of others provided an opportunity from a distance for assessment that is seldom possible in my own work. Also the development of findings and the analysis process was important for the level and the depth of understanding of the methodology and its outcomes for women that would not have been possible outside of the discipline

of the qualitative research process. As far as possible I have tried to develop my

interpretation and conclusions by relying on the voices of the eleven interesting women

who were involved in the study.

Finally, the experience of the last five years has helped to confirm for me the truth

of why I believe that the work of popular education can be described in the same way that

adult education was portrayed by Budd Hall of the Ontario Institute for Studies in

Education:

> Adult education is about our relationships, our communities, our places of
> work, our bio-regions; our political structures, our planet, and our universe. It is
> about us. It is about the kind of work we do. But above all it is about the right to
> imagine… the seeds of a transformed world exist within our communities, our
> social movements, our locations of resistance, and even within this room. (Hall,
> 1995)

My experience of seeking to understand the possibilities of popular education

through this qualitative research study has made it clear that I want to be in the rooms

where women and their communities are exercising the right to imagine.

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Appendix A

Participant Survey Results Summary (26 Respondents)

Type of Organization	Church 3	CBO 16	Grail 5	Other 6	
Constituency	Women Only 11	Mixed Men /Women 19	Other Youth, Children		
Role	Staff 13	Volunteer 7	Member 4	Leader 4	Teacher/ Facilitator 2
Demographic Data	Race /Class Participants • 15 white • 10 Latinas • 1 African • 7 working class • 19 middle class	Race/Class Constituency • 13 mixed poverty/low income context with mixed racial ethnic populations-White/Latino, White/Afr.Am. Latino/Afr.Am, Latino mix • 8 predominately white contexts with variable incomes-working class to high income • 4 contexts ethnically mixed with mixed incomes	Other-Youth		

Social Justice Concerns (Scale of 1-7 with 1 as highest interest)

	Poverty	Community Development	Women 's Empowerment	Education	Housing	Youth	Others
1	4	7	4	8	1	1	5
2	2	5	2	3	3	1	0
3	3	0	1	4	0	3	2
4	2	1	1	2	2	2	1
5	2	2	1	0	1	2	1
6	2	1	1	0	2	0	0
7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Goal

Skills, Knowledge, Attitudes	Transfer	Impact
• heighten awareness of folks in communities, aspirations for themselves and community • learn to function more effectively on board • improve teaching and create atmosphere for transformation • internal transformation -- out of comfort zone • better community organizing for environmental and social justice • personal empowerment • learning a different method of community organizing	• uncovering generative themes • equalizing voice • people centered community work • truly hearing and help folks vision • identify community goals, concerns • advocate for neighbors with building management • create an atmosphere for transformation of consciousness to take place • more effective facilitation of a community program • people centered community work minus overlaid agendas • apply to an organization in a Caucasian area with the growing Latino population	• creating access to sustainable healthy food in an overly polluted and food insecure neighborhood • strengthen the community on many levels as dictated by the United Way

Leadership

Changes
- workshop style over business meeting
- vision of leadership -- not all about me, not all my responsibility
- deeper connections, listen more intently, take time with what is being presented
- new ideas, new skills
- listening more than talking
- belief that people have their own answers
- clarified what I need to do an involvement with residence board
- greater recognition of knowledge of students as well as my responsibility as the teacher -- not an impossible role
- moving out of traditional woman in traditional church is fearful but did it
- internal change must happen prior to an external change
- clarified my philosophy of community organizing and gave me useful tools for articulating that philosophy and making change
- methods of creating community engagement rather than just talk
- method of organizing to draw on made a big difference

No change	Some change	Major change
	19	8

Skills

Most important	- Developing codes - three-tiered questioning - listening - importance of diverse perspectives - listening and finding the code in the situation - thinking in terms of codes - need to emphasize, see problems as reflective of broader issues that may not be readily apparent - listening! See others concerns as legitimate - the community is not imposed by the trainer but develops on its own - the importance of listening and finding out what is appropriate
Working	- Casual rather than pressured approach to encourage involvement - combine vision with specific requests - peace and organization and preparation worked - with community leaders dealing with conflict unwilling to see others views

	• friends and students gain confidence about their knowledge and/or courage to do something about their problems • rather than assuming, consciously creating spaces where needs can be identified
Not working • outreach	• Too little time • code work not completed • unable to get beyond square one because the rest of the community was satisfied with things as they were

Skills Needed	• Trained partner • more practice • ways to adapt the process to larger committees • training II • more ways to use with middle-class leaders who don't think they own problems • pay closer attention to skills I already have, work with partner • reinforced learning with region participants • outreach ideas

Contexts
• Educational committee -- racism and poverty • building multiple layered communities around issues of peace • community becoming active in problem solving, believing in themselves • neighborhood in serious decline -- housing, crime, drugs, school dropout issues • Women's Studies department -- everyone is seen as an equally important member • the Grail • working with integrating TFCT skills and philosophy in an atmosphere where the boss has a very different way of organizing

Appendix B

Participant Survey Invitation Letters

From the TFCT Grail project team…

The Grail is interested in learning more about how women have experienced the program, Training for Community Transformation, both the training itself and your efforts to use it in your own community. We hope, now that some time has passed since your training, you will be able to share your reflections on TFCT with us. In thinking about the future training sessions, three aspects of your experience will help us:

(1) personal impact of the training,

(2) skills learned and used

(3) social justice problems being addressed

Your response will help us to better develop the training by meeting the needs of other women working for social change in their communities and to provide us with important information about how we could offer additional support to you for your work. We appreciate your help. We will send you the results of the surveys as soon as they are available.

Training for Community Transformation

March 1, 2005

Dear TFCT Participant,

Greetings from the Grail.

We are writing to let you know that we are continuing to think about the future of the
Training for Community Transformation Program. As the work continues to develop,
we need to ask for your input.

Enclosed you will find a TFCT Participant Response form. It asks you to share some of
your experiences and thoughts as a result of your participation in the TFCT training.
Please take the time to complete it right now, and return it in the self-addressed,
stamped envelope. We hope that you can return it to us no later than March 15. We
really need to hear back from you, so future the TFCT participants can gain from your
experience.

Blessings,

Maureen Tate

Appendix C

Training for Community Transformation

Participant Response Regarding Impact of Training

Name:_____ Date:_____

Type of organization/volunteer activity (circled the most appropriate):
    (1) church related group, (2) community-based organization, (3) Grail group, (4)

       other

       (specify)_____

Constituency: (1) women only, (2) men and women

Your Role (circled the most appropriate) (1) staff, (2), (3) member, (4) leader, (5) other

(specify)_____

Social Justice Concerns (s) marked according to priority -- one being highest:

_____ poverty _____ community development_____ women's

empowerment_____ education_____ housing_____ youth_____ other

(Specify_____)

General information about your community:

Race and ethnicity_____

Income levels_____

Other_____

Your Goal for using TFCT:

_____

_____

_____

Your community:
1. Can you say more about that community/situation you are working in and how use the TFCT skills are relevant to the work of the organization?

2. Have you noticed any changes in relationships within the organization as a result of your use of TFCT methodologies (e.g. Better communication, greater ownership of the project, increased respect, etc.)?_____ Yes
    _____ No
    Please give an example of these changes.

3. Please describe the most important problem(s) that you think you are facing in trying to apply TFCT skills.

You as a Leader
1. as of TFCT affected you personally (e.g. more confidence, improve the skills, new vision of leadership etc.)?_____ Yes
    _____ No

Circle the phrase that best describes its effect:

No change   some change   major change

Name the changes:

_____

_____

_____

2. Please give a specific example(s) of a situation(s) in which you may be doing things differently or understanding them differently as a result of the training.

3. Any other comments about the impact of the training on you personally?

Yours skills

1. What do you consider to be the most important skill(s) you learned or developed as a result of the TFCT training?

2. Please list some specific examples of situations in which you have used these skills.

3. In these situations what worked? What didn't work? Why?

4. What additional skills do you think you need to enhance your use of TFCT skills, in order to accomplish your goal(s)?

Appendix C

Training for Community Transformation

Participant Response Regarding Impact of Training

Name:_____ Date:_____

Type of organization/volunteer activity (circled the most appropriate):
    (2) church related group, (2) community-based organization, (3) Grail group, (4)

    other

    (specify)_____

Constiuency: (1) women only, (2) men and women

Your Role (circled the most appropriate) (1) staff, (2), (3) member, (4) leader, (5) other

(specify)_____

Social Justice Concerns (s) marked according to priority -- one being highest:

_____ poverty _____ community development_____ women's

empowerment_____ education_____ housing_____ youth_____ other

(Specify_____)

General information about your community:

Race and ethnicity_____

Income levels_____

Other_____

Your Goal for using TFCT:

_____

_____

_____

Your community:
1. Can you say more about that community/situation you are working in and how use the TFCT skills are relevant to the work of the organization?

2. Have you noticed any changes in relationships within the organization as a result of your use of TFCT methodologies (e.g. Better communication, greater ownership of the project, increased respect, etc.)?_____ Yes
    _____ No
    Please give an example of these changes.

3. Please describe the most important problem(s) that you think you are facing in trying to apply TFCT skills.

You as a Leader

    4. as of TFCT affected you personally (e.g. more confidence, improve the skills, new vision of leadership etc.)?_____ Yes

        _____ No

        Circle the phrase that best describes its effect:

        No change   some change   major change

        Name the changes:

        _____

        _____

        _____

    5. Please give a specific example(s) of a situation(s) in which you may be doing things differently or understanding them differently as a result of the training.

    6. Any other comments about the impact of the training on you personally?

Yours skills

    4. What do you consider to be the most important skill(s) you learned or developed as a result of the TFCT training?

    5. Please list some specific examples of situations in which you have used these skills.

    6. In these situations what worked? What didn't work? Why?

    7. What additional skills do you think you need to enhance your use of TFCT skills, in order to accomplish your goal(s)?

Appendix D

Interview Protocol

Learning

    Knowledge

1. What is your overall assessment of the usefulness of the TFCT methodologies?
2. You feel that the training provided enough understanding of the theory, principles of problem posing education and the educational theories of Paulo Freire to enable you to use the methodology in your local situation? Why, or why not?
3. What new principles and theories did you learn at the TFCT that can be useful to you in your work?

Skills

1. What specific skills did you learn at the TFCT training that you feel will be useful to you in your work, for example: listening, discerning generative themes, codes etc. Why are they useful?
2. What skills in the methodology do you feel are not relevant to your work? Why?

Attitudes and Behavior

1. How do you see your attitudes toward yourself changing as a result of the TFCT, particularly you ability to work on social justice issues?
2. How do you see your attitudes towards those you work within the organization changing as a result of the training?
3. Did you ways of work change? In what ways? Please give an example of this change.
4. What, if any, changes do you see in others as a result of changes in your way of work as a result of the TFCT training?

Transfer

1. Describe the situations in which you used TFCT skills.

2. How do you judge their effectiveness?

    a. Knowing what you know how what part of the training would you want more of in order to be able to work more effectively in your situation? Describe what difference you think it would make.

3. What are the major barriers in your situation to using the TFCT methodologies? Comment on how reaction to your use of the methodologies may have been effected by your ethnic, racial and/or gender identity.

Impact

1. What are the specific problems/changes/goals that you want to work on using the TFCT methodologies?

2. How do you think the TFCT can play a role?

3. Describe any changes that you have seen so far.

4. Describe any aspects of the local situation that make it difficult to use the TFCT methodologies or community factors that make the situation difficult to work in.

5. Would on-going support and problem solving with others using the methodology help you?

6. Do you think it would be helpful if you could work as a part of a team? Why, or why not?

Appendix E

Consent Form to Participate in a Research Study

<u>Title of Study</u>: Training for Community Transformation: Popular Education
Methodologies For Women's Leadership Training for Social Change Advocacy A Case
Study

<u>Principal Investigator</u>: elmira Nazombe
INTRODUCTION
**You are invited to participate in a research study. Before you agree to participate in
this study, you should know enough about it to make an informed decision. If you
have any questions, ask the investigator. You should be satisfied with the answers
before you agree to be in the study.**
You are one of sixty-three women have participated in the Training for Community
Transformation Program of the US Grail since 2002. As one of the participants in the
program, the US Grail believes that your experiences and insights can make an important
contribution to judging the impact of the program and planning for future trainings.

BACKGROUND/PURPOSE
The purpose of this study is to gather information on personal changes, organizational
changes and the difficulties experienced because of the social, economic and political
power circumstances of the communities in which trainees work.   You will be one of ten
women chosen from all three training sessions. The ten of you will be similar to the
variety of age, race, ethnicity, and types of communities and issue interests of the total
trainee group.

INFORMATION
Participation in this study will involve the following:
<u>Individual Interviews</u>: You will have a one-hour telephone or in person interview in
which you will have an opportunity to share your thoughts about the skills you developed
in the training as well your experiences in using the training in your own community.
Each interview will be recorded and transcribed. You will receive a copy of the
transcribed interview for review and correction. Direct quotations from your interview
will be used only with your permission and always using the pseudonym that you select.
The amount of time required for the interview session and for the total duration of the
study would be as follows:
<u>Individual Interviews </u>will be approximately one hour in length.
<u>Review of Transcripts</u> will require approximately one-two hours.
Total time required over the life of the study approximately three hours.

Sign Below if you agree to the audio taping of your interview in this research study.

Subject's Signature _____**Date**_____

Subject's Initials_____

ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATION
Participation in the study is voluntary. All activities will be arranged as far as possible to honor participant time constraints.

RISKS
There are no risks or discomforts associated with participation in this study. No emotional distress in connection with interviews is anticipated.

BENEFITS
Participation in the study will give you an opportunity to reflect on your experiences and may be helpful in suggesting ways to improve your use of skills developed in the training. In addition you will make an important contribution to the planning for the future of the program.

CONFIDENTIALITY
The information of the transcripts will be kept strictly confidential. All interviewees will chose pseudonyms to be used in any reporting. Data will be stored in a locked cabinet and/or restricted-access computer and will be made available only to persons conducting the study unless you specifically give permission in writing to do otherwise.

COMPENSATION
For participating in this study you will not receive compensation.

CONTACT
If you have questions at any time about the research or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, elmira Nazombe at 732-317-4262. If you have any questions about your rights as a research **subject, you may contact the Sponsored Programs Administrator at:**
Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559
Tel: 732-932-0150 ext. 2104
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

_____
Subject Initials

PARTCIPATION
Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to participate you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits in which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be removed from the data set and destroyed.

Sign below if you agree to participate in this research study. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Subject's signature_____ **Date** _____

Investigator's signature _____**Date**_____

Legally authorized representative's signature _____**Date**_____
(*if applicable*)