

Research Paper 26

**Empowerment Through Journal Writing?
Border Pedagogy at Work**

Ian Cook
Department of Geography
St David's University College, Lampeter

August 1996

Geography Laboratory
Arts Building C
University of Sussex
Falmer
Brighton BN1 9QN

ISBN 1 874465 26 6

£4.00

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH JOURNAL WRITING? BORDER PEDAGOGY AT WORK

Ian Cook

Contents

Abstract	4
Border Research and Border Pedagogy	5
Introducing the Transatlantic and its Journals, 1995-96	9
Border Pedagogy at Work?	15
'Empowerment' through Journal Writing?	20
Concluding Comments	29
Bibliography and Notes	31
 Figure 1. The student notice-board: a public forum for debating border pedagogy	 17

ABSTRACT:

Linda McDowell (1994) has recently called for styles of teaching which put into practice arguments about the 'politics of difference' which are becoming an increasingly common part of geographical research. This paper discusses a case study in which these politics have been applied to structure an undergraduate option course entitled 'Histories & cultures of the Transatlantic'. Here, week by week, students have been required to write a journal charting their own journey through the lectures, reading materials and discussions to make a sense of these materials as they are relevant to their own experiences, fascinations and concerns. In the 'border' pedagogical literature which supports such an approach, it is argued that encouraging students to write their way into such courses is 'empowering' for them. This paper thus draws on my experiences of orchestrating this course and how this 'empowerment' seems to have worked. For those teachers thinking about adopting such practices themselves, I argue that this can productively be thought of not as an 'empowerment' of students *en masse*, but as a means to transform existing power relations in the classroom to make them more equitable. Moreover, I argue that journal writing can not be seen simply as a teaching 'technique' which can be applied in the same way under all circumstances. Border pedagogy, journal writing and student empowerment are discussed, here, as processes which evolve within specific institutional contexts, a point which must be understood when thinking about their introduction.

Keywords: Border pedagogy, situated knowledges, journal writing, student empowerment.

Empowerment through Journal Writing? Border Pedagogy at Work

Teachers need to be educated to be border crossers, to explore zones of cultural difference by moving in and out of the resources, histories, and narratives that provide different students with a sense of identity, place and possibility”
Henry Giroux 1991:341.

“We seek those ruled by partial sight and limited voice - not partiality for its own sake but, rather, for the sake of the connections and unexpected openings (that) situated knowledges make possible”
Donna Haraway 1988:590.

In a recent article on ‘Polyphony and pedagogic authority’, Linda McDowell (1994) has argued for the need to transpose the theories/politics of feminist and post-modern research and writing into pedagogical practice. In a climate where more and more arguments are made for the decentring of academic authority and the production of “texts (which) attempt to represent and position not just the views of the author but also the multiple and often conflicting voices of many subjects” (*ibid.* pp.241), she has argued for classrooms in which attempts are made to represent and position not just the views of teachers but also the multiple and often conflicting voices of students. In this paper, I want to outline my experiences of trying to do this in order to teach a final year undergraduate course at Lampeter called ‘Histories and cultures of the transatlantic’, to discuss its assessment through written journals rather than conventional examination, and to try to think about the notion of ‘empowerment’ as it can work through this kind of pedagogical practice.

The assessment of undergraduate courses through journals is not, however, something which I believe can be written about in a general sense. As Linda McDowell has suggested, the subject matter of a course and its means of teaching and assessment need to be compatible. Thus, it is important to point out how journals have been used in this course to bring together the politics and principles of ‘border pedagogical’ theory and the politics and principles of ‘border research and writing’, particularly that based in the literature on ‘extroverted senses of place’ and ‘Black Atlantic diaspora’. To properly assess their ‘empowerment’ value, then, this paper is structured in four parts, i) to outline the common features of the ‘border’ research and pedagogy which make this course suitable for examination by journal; ii) to show how I have attempted to explain this to students taking the course; iii) to discuss students’ reactions to this process as the course progressed and, particularly, at its end; and, finally, iv) not to address the question of whether classes do or do not become ‘empowered’ en masse but, rather, of how power relations within and beyond the classroom can become *re-aligned* through this ‘border pedagogical’ practice.

1. BORDER RESEARCH AND BORDER PEDAGOGY

In a series of articles on what could be called ‘border research’, Doreen Massey (1991, 1992, 1995) has argued that geographers need to find alternatives to their/our discipline’s introverted conventions which have led to considerable amounts of time and effort being spent drawing lines around neighbourhoods, cities, nation-states, world regions, and so on, to define and to

study them as discrete units, and then to writing up accounts of these units as if they existed as 'absolutes', in and of themselves. Criticising this as an approach which "can so easily be yet another way of constructing a counterposition between 'us' and 'them'" (1991 pp.28), she and others have proposed alternatives which stress, i) how boundaries are constructed out of struggles taking place between specific peoples at specific times in specific places for specific reasons; ii) how traditional constructions of "us's" and "thems", "heres" and "theres" are hard to sustain given the powerfully co-implicated histories of different places and peoples, and how these continue to develop; and iii) how the acknowledgement of such co-implication requires a re-working of the term 'difference' from one in which this is used to signify an absolute definition of one introverted place or group against its 'others', to one in which it signifies multiple identities and partial connections between variously located peoples and places (see Cook & Crang 1995; Haraway 1988; Harvey 1993; Katz 1992; Mani 1992; Marcus 1986, 1992; Marcus & Fischer 1986; McLaren 1994; Minh-ha 1986-7; C. Mohanty 1994; S. Mohanty 1989).

In terms of the 'Transatlantic' course, these themes have been most developed in Paul Gilroy's (1992, 1993a&b) work on the 'Black Atlantic' world. Among other things, he has argued that, particularly since Columbus's landing in the 'West Indies' with an African pilot on board his ship, the Atlantic ocean has been continually crossed and criss-crossed by multi-national/cultural/racial classes of people who were not only engaged, for instance, in the horrors of the triangular trade but also in struggles against them in common pursuits of emancipation, autonomy and citizenship (see also Benítez Rojo 1992; Hall 1992; James 1938, Linebaugh 1982, 1991; Linebaugh & Rediker 1990; Ware 1992). Moreover, for Gilroy, writing about this world is not just a matter of erecting another fence around another group of people, studying 'their' features, and concluding that 'they' somehow form a discrete cultural unit, which is somehow 'essentially' different from 'its'/'their' 'others'. Rather, he has focused on the diasporic and fragmented Black Atlantic world as a means of making connections between local and global forces and of blurring the boundaries between 'Black' and 'British' histories and cultures - an important goal for anti-racist scholars in the UK working to provide alternatives to dominant representations of an introverted and (implicitly or otherwise) white national past (see Agyeman 1993; Coster 1991; Fryer 1984, 1993; Gilroy 1987; Tawadros 1988).

Therefore, central to the serious entanglement of these politics in this course - not simply as abstract concepts to be learned, but as means of restructuring the relations between reading and writing, lecturer and student, and classroom and the outside world - has been the requirement for students not only to *trace out* the co-implicatedness of the supposedly discrete 'places', 'economies', 'states', 'cultures', 'peoples', etc.. of 'the Caribbean', 'Africa' and 'Europe', but also to *write themselves into and out of* the changing histories and cultures in/of this transatlantic space. In doing this, I have tried to encourage a 'situated knowledge' approach along the same lines as that taken by Cindi Katz (1992), who has written about how she has attempted:

"to locate myself in my own experience of oppression and opposition as a means to find common ground, cross fertilisations, and move towards a *politics of engagement*. ... These translations entail *moving outward* to engage in the shifting differences and uneven power relations between subject positions, and moving *inward* to understand the differences within each of us, what Trinh T. Minh-ha calls the '*inappropriate/d other*', that affirms 'I am like you/I am different' is a way of *undercutting the opposition* between insider and outsider and finding a space between" (pp.507).

The aim of journal writing - like the politics of research and writing which have structured the work of Massey, Gilroy and Katz - is to work against distanced, 'touristic' perspectives on the matters in hand by encouraging students to undercut and to find spaces between the either/or binaries of Western tradition such as 'self'/'other', 'centre'/'margin', 'West'/'Rest', 'white'/'black', 'male'/'female', 'culture'/'nature' and so on which, to quote Donna Haraway "have all been systematic to the logics of domination of women, people of colour, nature, workers, animals - in short, domination of all constituted as others, whose task is to mirror the self" (in Pile 1994 pp.262).

These kinds of aims have been given a significant boost in an emerging area of pedagogical theory and practice in which the translation of the principles of border research and writing into border pedagogy has been developed by writers such as Henry Giroux (1991, 1992, 1994a&b; Giroux & McLaren 1994; Giroux & Trend 1992), bell hooks (1994), Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1994) and Mary Louise Pratt (1991; Miller 1994). Perhaps the central planks of the 'pedagogical' theory and practice which they have worked on are that: i) education provides students with accounts of how culture is organised, traditionally in such a way that the teacher's version is the one which has to be taken on as correct (this is known as the 'banking system' of education); ii) classrooms are increasingly becoming home to students from more diverse backgrounds whose own experiences of how culture is organised may be very different from the way their teachers see things and, if unwilling or unable to go along with this, many such students can end up doing badly in their exams; iii) a border pedagogy is one in which teachers can move from being knowledge generators to knowledge facilitators, encouraging students to build upon the knowledges they bring to the class, iv) education therefore becomes more flexible and relevant to their concerns, and pedagogical conditions can be fostered in which students build up committed, involved, and self-conscious understandings both "in order to understand otherness on its own terms, and to further create borderlands in which diverse cultural resources allow for the fashioning of new identities within existing configurations of power" (Giroux 1991 pp.510); and, therefore, v) students can become 'empowered' through engaging with debates from their own perspectives rather than through passively learning them from others. Indicating the connection between border research and border pedagogy, then, Abdul JanMohammed (in *ibid.*) has written how "border crossing becomes a metaphor for inviting students and teachers to cross over into different cultural zones in order to 'map the politics of their forays into other cultures'".

As bell hooks (1994) has argued, the adoption of a border pedagogical approach must involve a change in attitude and practice on the part of teachers and students alike, one which moves away from the idea that the culture of the classroom is always the same even when the combinations of students are different, and towards one in which this culture is always different because this combination is always different. Here, she has continued, the 'border classroom' should be one in which there is no desk or lectern at the front from which teachers can speak, but an arrangement of students and teacher(s) in a circle so each has to recognise the others' presence. In doing this, as with seminars and tutorials, the conventional ordered lecturing scenario in which teachers are the only people who have something to teach and students are the only people who have something to learn can begin to be overturned.

Many teachers, as hooks (1994) has put it, are used to projecting themselves through an "erasure of the body (which) encourages (students) to think that (they) are listening to neutral, objective facts, facts that are not particular to who is sharing the information" (*ibid.* pp.139). She and Ron Scapp have argued that this situation can and should be changed through teachers speaking from

a situated perspective and thereby attempting to undermine their absolute authority by showing students that it is possible for them "to claim a (similar) knowledge base from which they can speak" (Scapp in *ibid.* pp.148). In putting this into practice, as Mary Louise Pratt (1991) has described it, this has meant that teachers have to start to work *with*, rather than to dismiss, "the knowledge that whatever one said was going to be systematically received in radically heterogeneous ways that we were neither able nor entitled to prescribe" (pp.39). Moreover, this has also meant that teachers have had to make the important transition from a conventional detachment from, to an unconventional, more 'personal' involvement in, their students' experiences of a class. This ceding of authority by teachers and an acknowledgement of different readings of what they and others have said should, so the argument goes, encourage students to take their own and each other's knowledge more seriously, to trust their own, rather than solely their teacher's, judgement on matters, and to believe that they have something to learn from each other and not just from whoever should be 'in charge'. Here, with the appropriate orchestration of lectures, reading materials, group discussions and so on, and with teachers acting more as *facilitators* than as generators of knowledge, classrooms ideally become disturbing and exciting places for all concerned.

Thus, as Henry Giroux (1991) has outlined it, this kind of classroom is a place where teachers can "enter into negotiation and dialogue around issues of nationality, difference and identity so as to be able to fashion a more ethical and democratic set of pedagogical relations between themselves and their students while simultaneously allowing students to speak, listen, and learn differently within pedagogical spaces that are safe, affirming, questioning and enabling" (pp.341). Providing a sense of what this can mean in practice when things go 'well', Mary Louise Pratt (1991) has recalled one class in which:

"all the students saw their roots traced back to legacies of both glory and shame; ... Virtually every student was having the experience of seeing the world described with him or her in it. Along with rage, incomprehension, and pain, there were exhilarating moments of wonder and revelation, mutual understanding, and new wisdom - the joys of the contact zone. ... No one was excluded, and no one was safe" (*ibid.* pp.39; Giroux 1991).

However, as she and others (e.g. hooks 1994; Mohanty 1994) have indicated, putting border pedagogy into practice is by no means easy as tensions inevitably arise in the creation of less hierarchical and more messy 'classroom cultures' which are often difficult to resolve for all concerned and this has implications for any discussion of the 'empowerment' which can take place under these circumstances (see later).

Finally, the implementation of 'border pedagogical' practice implies not only a realignment of the politics and subject matter of a class, but also a realignment in the means of assessing what the students have 'learned' there. Here, what is needed is something which allows students to focus in on and to develop their 'differences' with 'others' in creative ways, to develop their own positions and 'voices' in reaction to what they have 'learned', and to provide their teachers with a tangible product of this process which can be assessed. In the border classroom, students have the tricky task of entangling their practices of reading academic and other texts, of listening to lecturers, fellow class members and others, of offering their own versions of events individually and collectively in class, in private conversations, and eventually, perhaps, in journals. Thus, unlike other kinds of courses, the knowledge engendered through border pedagogical practice is often much more obviously dialogic and it is here that the politics and practices of journal and

other forms of creative writing can be built upon. Here, Sissel Lie (1988) has championed 'process oriented' writing:

"the theory being that you can learn to write better texts in dialogue with other writers and with literary texts. Writing is seen as a process whereby teacher and students can engage in an exchange all the way to the finished product. Students are encouraged to write spontaneously, to submit their first efforts to the teacher and the other students at an early stage and discuss and rewrite many times before they consider the text finished. A secondary product of this method is that the students learn to think with their pencils, and perhaps even more important, they learn to feel with their pencils" (pp.199).

This process-oriented writing can take place in class, giving the lecturer orchestrating a discussion the ability to ask each student to speak from prepared notes rather than off the top of her/his head (hooks 1994; Lie 1988). However, more substantial writing outside of the classroom can encourage a situation in which "not only are borders being challenged, crossed and refigured, but borderlands are being created in which the very production and acquisition of knowledge is being used by students to rewrite their own histories, identities and learning possibilities" (Giroux 1991 pp.512). This is where journals fit in as sustained attempts at doing this, week by week, as a course progresses. But, as I mentioned earlier, the development of this knowledge and its means of assessment have to make sense in the context of what the course that it is based in is supposed to be 'about'. Thus, the following sections of this paper provide i) an illustration of this in the context of the "Transatlantic" course as described in the course outline given to the students at the start of the 1995-1996 session (when what happened during the course of the 1994-1995 session was used to give an impression of what should happen this time), ii) illustrations of the 1994-1995 students' reactions to what happened within and outside of their journals, iii) a discussion of what 'empowerment' might mean in the context of this border pedagogical practice and, finally, iv) some concluding comments on this.

2. INTRODUCING THE TRANSATLANTIC AND ITS JOURNALS, 1995-6

"It is (or ought to be) impossible even to begin thinking about Kilburn High Road without bringing into play half the world and a considerable amount of British imperialist history"

Doreen Massey 1991:28.

"...the Caribbean flows outward past the limits of its own sea with a vengeance, and its *Ultima Thule* may be found on the outskirts of Bombay, near the low and murmuring shores of Gambia, in an old Bristol pub, in a commercial warehouse in Bordeaux at the time of Colbert, in a windmill beside the Zuider Zee, at a café in a barrio of Manhattan, in the existential *saudade* of an old Portuguese lyric"

Antonio Benítez-Rojo 1992:3.

Course aims..

In recent years, the nature of 'identity' has come under increasing scrutiny. Instead of ring-fencing places, regions and people(s), naming them, and constructing accounts of what and who 'they' essentially are - a 'geographical' way of doing things if ever there was one - writers such as Doreen Massey and Antonio Benítez-Rojo have stressed the need not only to question the apparent 'objectivity' of these accounts but also to 'de-centre' them by tracing out the complex connections between different places and peoples throughout human history. In particular, tracing out such connections has become an important goal for anti-racist scholars in the UK who are working against a widespread notion that, some time in 'our' dim and distant past, there was a

peaceful, independent and, implicitly, white 'Great Britain' before large numbers of 'immigrants' began to arrive on its shores from 'the (former) colonies' in the late 1950s. The aim of this course, then, is to dispute this introverted 'British' history by tracing a number of connections back and forth across the Atlantic as peoples, ideas and commodities have, *for hundreds of years*, travelled between Europe, Africa and the Caribbean such that the 'identity' of no place or person can be understood in isolation. By talking through various histories and cultures of the transatlantic - this 'space of betweenness' - we will attempt to productively blur the boundaries we have all grown up with which demarcate various kinds of 'us' from various kinds of 'them', and to explore and question the de-centred nature of modern social and cultural life.

Course structure..

This course will not provide you with a chronological history of the Transatlantic world in which *this* happened, then *this* happened, then, lo and behold, *this* happened, etc.. but will be taught in terms of topics which can be seen to overlap and connect histories and cultures which have stretched across this ocean from 1492 - when Columbus supposedly 'discovered' the Americas - to the present day. ... Session by session, the course will look like this:

Date:	Lecture:	Discussion:
13 Oct.	Introduction.	Course handout.
20 Oct.	Situated knowledges.	Slide exercise: 'Reading into things' (+ film slot).
27 Oct.	Reading into Columbus.	Extracts from Columbus' Log, (1492-3).
3 Nov.	Reading out of Columbus 1.	Bartolomé de las Casas' (1552) <i>A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies</i> .
10 Nov.	Reading out of Columbus 2.	18th and 19th century Enlightenment texts. (+ see Disney's new feature <i>Pochahontos</i>).
17 Nov.	Columbus in 1992.	The Quincentenary: mainstream and 'insurgent' commemorations (+ film slot).
24 Nov.	From Gold to Sugar.	The mechanics of plantation slavery: selected texts.
1 Dec.	Creolisation of culture.	Resistance to plantation slavery: selected texts.
8 Dec.	Creole languages.	Historical and modern day legitimacies and usage: from Cassidy & LePage's (1967) <i>Dictionary of Jamaican English</i> to the Sistren Theatre Collective's (1986) <i>Lionheart Gal: life stories of Jamaican women</i> .
15 Dec.	(No session)	

- 15 Jan. (Course reviews)
- 22 Jan. Abolition & emancipation. Writings by 18th and 19th century 'Black Atlantic' activists: Olaudah Equiano's (1789) *The Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa the African*; Robert Weddeburn's (1802-1828) *The Horrors of Slavery & other writings*; Mary Prince's (1832) *The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave, related by herself.*, & Frederick Douglass's (1845) *Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass, an American slave, written by himself* (+ film slot).
- 2 Feb. 'Civilising' freed slaves. Missionary societies in the UK and their activities in Jamaica in the mid-late 19th century: selected texts.
- 9 Feb. 'Civilising' imperial youth 1. Early 20th century Scout and Guiding manuals including Robert Baden-Powell's (1930) *Rovering to success: a book of life sport for boys*, and a 1953 edition of his *Scouting for Boys*.
- 16 Feb. 'Civilising' imperial youth 2. Early-mid 20th century 'Jungle fiction' of Edgar Rice Burroughs *Tarzan* novels (+ film slot).
- 23 Feb. 'Civilising' imperial youth 3. 1940s Hollywood films from the US Government's 'Good Neighbour' era: the surreal romantic musical comedy of Busby Berkeley's (1943) film *The Gang's All Here* to the weirdly charged (1945) Walt Disney animated feature *The Three Caballeros* (+ film slot).
- 1 Mar Slavery on the 1990s? Unpicking the fetishism in Euro-American consumer cultures of commodities sourced from the former colonial tropics: case studies including tropical fruit, chocolate, tea, coffee, sugar and tobacco (+film slot).
- 8 Mar. 'New ethnicities'/Britishness. Rethinking the boundaries of 'Britishness' through looking at recent work on extroverted senses of place and identity in sport, autobiography, film, education, advertising, visual and performance arts, and museums.

- 15 Mar. "Now, that's what I call Transatlantic!" Group presentations of course themes through the medium of popular music and its performers (+ film slot).
- 22 Mar. "Bristol & the Sea": field trip. A trip to one of the British empire's premier ports whose history is unavoidably bound up in the triangular Atlantic trade system of guns, slaves and sugar. The intention of the trip is to assess how the city's maritime 'heritage' is being represented for its 1996 'Festival of the Sea' and in the opening of its 'Empire & Commonwealth museum' {new for 1995-1996}.
- 26 Apr. Border Pedagogy at work? A look back at the course, its content, its journals and the principles of the 'border pedagogical' theory which supports their use. A conclusion to the course in which *you* will discuss and debate what it has been 'about' from your own perspectives.

In the week before each session, you will be provided with a handout outlining the content of, readings associated with, and instructions for the following week's session. ...

Approaches to teaching and learning..

This course will not involve a seamless stream of lectures but, instead, will be structured so as to mix up various ways of teaching and learning. The aim will be to encourage as much participation as possible by all members of the class and, therefore, you will be presented not only with 'finished' articles on the various topics we will cover, but also with various kinds of primary information such as the diaries of 'explorers' like Christopher Columbus, autobiographies of slavery such as that of Mary Prince, animated films like Disney's 'The Three Caballeros', 'civilisation manuals' such as Baden-Powell's 'Scouting for Boys' and 'The Brownie Guide Handbook', popular fiction such as Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan* books, British supermarket leaflets on how to prepare and eat 'exotic' fruits, and cassette tapes of popular reggae, ska, township jive and funk music (2). I will also try to engineer some student-led discussions, role-playing exercises and anything else which seems appropriate to the matters in hand. The plan is to be fairly flexible about how this course is structured, to allow you to draw on your own experiences (both inside and outside your formal 'education') to contribute to the class, and to produce more questions than 'answers'. All being well, I hope that this will allow each of you, in your own way, to achieve a balance of fascination and unease with the subject matter we will cover.

Journals..

The large thing you need to know is that this course has *no examination component*. Because it is designed to call into question the relationships between selves and others (both materially and symbolically), it will be examined instead through a *course journal*. Notes (tape-recordings, etc.) for this should be made each week which you should build into *fortnightly entries* throughout the first two terms and into a concluding entry in the third term. The big idea is that you should use your journal to *think through* your reactions to the course, what related ideas come to mind

from other courses, from your everyday life 'outside', from your past experiences, etc., and how you *see yourself* in the contexts of the Transatlantic histories and cultures we will be getting into. Your entries will not require any special preparation except *attendance in class* so that you have something to *react to* and a willingness to make use of the set (and other) readings which will be provided. You *must not* simply write down what was discussed in class (I will know this because I will have been there) but should show on paper how you have *thought carefully* about the issues under discussion and have tried to make a wider and/or deeper sense out of them. Moreover, writing a journal will allow you to *express* and to *think through* any half-baked or embarrassing ideas you may have been reluctant to bring up in class and to *creatively express yourself* rather than to rehearse stock arguments as many students like and/or have to do in examinations (I used to, even if you don't). For those of you who are unsure about exactly what this might involve, *have a go* at this for a month and then hand it in ... and I'll get it back to you within a week. Throughout the course you should feel free to drop by for a chat about what you think you should read, what you might write about, and/or to hand in your journal for further comments. The completed journal will have to be submitted at *noon* on *7th May 1996*, therefore giving you the opportunity to copy out your hasty scribbles into your best handwriting, to add illustrations, and whatever else, over the Easter break. ...

Journal checklist..

It may be a good idea to check before, during and/or after making each journal entry that you have more-or-less made sure of the following. While I want to encourage a flexibility of approach in your journals, their most basic essentials are set out below. Please bear in mind that these are the criteria which I will use in *marking* what you write in the dim and distant future.

- a) Unless specified in the lecture at the time, you should write *one entry every fortnight*. So, for instance, your journal should start with your reactions to this *Introduction* and the following session on *situated knowledges*. Therefore, your completed journal should have *ten* entries.
- b) Each entry should be *rooted in* the sessions held during those two weeks, but you should aim to productively *stray away* from them in some kind of coherent direction or directions. To do this, you should *draw on* the *set readings* to go into more depth about something covered in class and, more importantly, to talk about *connected issues* which were *skimmed over* and/or *completely ignored in class*.
- c) As a rough rule of thumb, you should probably *scratch and sniff* 5 or 6 appropriate readings *each week*, *read* 3 or 4, and *note* at least 2 of them for your fortnightly entry. Each entry, therefore, should contain knowledgeable discussion of *at least four* new readings.
- d) Each entry should also involve making other *outside connections*: to events in your own lives; ... to ideas covered in other courses; to current issues covered in magazines, newspapers, films, TV shows, etc.; and - as a fail-safe source, perhaps - to the 'top selling' glossy heritage magazine *This England*.
- e) Each entry should be written assuming that the person reading it knows very little about what the course and readings have involved. Thus, you should concentrate on *explaining* what you are on about rather than skipping over and through various terms, events, readings, etc.. The best way for me to tell whether and how you have understood what you have written about is through your *explanations* of different kinds of connections rather than simply your making of these connections and leaving it at that.

f) Each entry should be written from a *situated knowledge* perspective and should build on the themes identified in the 'course aims' above. Your journal should be consistently written in the *first person* and should be consistently 'Transatlantic'.

g) All readings should be referenced in the text as you would reference them *in an essay* and you should provide a bibliography *either* at the end of each entry *or* lumped together at the end of your completed journal.

h) You should probably aim to write at least *four sides of A4* (or equivalent) for *each entry* so that you can really *get your teeth* into the issues. Unless under exceptional circumstances, you should *not* worry about writing too much. As a rough rule of thumb, your journal should be around the same length as your final year dissertation.

Reading..

As you may have noticed, this course will involve a *considerable amount of reading* which will have to be kept up with *each week* as the second hour of almost every session will involve the contributions of *your* ideas to the class based on papers which will be circulated the week before. When this course ran last year, this involved 7 groups of students being assigned one reading each to report back on each week, and multiple copies of 228 different readings were provided *in boxes* for easy access on *short term loan* behind the *issue desk in the main library*, and this supply has been supplemented by a number of books which have been placed on short term loan, and a small supply of photocopies which I can lend out from my office. Wherever these readings are and whatever you do with them, your *knowledge of*, and *thoughts about*, them should somehow appear in class, in your coursework essay (if you choose to do one) and, most importantly, in your *journal*. For this reason, I have tried to include as much 'groovy' reading as possible (believe me, students last year referred to some of the readings below in exactly these terms) and to avoid the dry and the dusty so that, hopefully, you will get *sucked in* to the materials and will want to take them off in all kinds of directions. To ease this process, once your reading groups are formed and the reading process begins, you should consider ways in which you can work as a team to cover enough of the right kinds of readings. In particular, when trawling through the reading boxes, you should recommend readings which you have enjoyed to each other and, to prepare for class discussions, some groups last year even held meetings outside class hours to discuss what they had read as a group. I would encourage any such inventive and co-operative approaches, and would advise you to form complementary groups over the weekend ready to sign them up next week. A copy of the full reading list is attached.

Purchasing decisions..

Due to the immense availability of photocopied readings, you should *not* have to buy any books for this course and none have been ordered to fill the shelf in the bookstore. However, should you want to acquaint yourself with the most state-of-the-art Transatlantic volume, then the fab but sometimes difficult following would be worth a gamble for about 12 quid:

Paul Gilroy (1993)

The black atlantic: modernity & double consciousness.

London: Verso.

And, if you are not too embarrassed to take it off the newsagent's shelf and buy it (particularly if you are an English person living in Wales), I heartily recommend that you try to buy a copy or

two of the journal *This England* for copious illustration of how an 'introverted sense of place' is still written and represented in British/English(?) popular culture. ...

3. BORDER PEDAGOGY AT WORK?

Having set out the basic principles of border research, border pedagogy and the course and journals in which I have attempted to combine them, I now want to move on to question the degree to which these have 'worked' together in practice. Before doing so, however, it is worth pointing out that, while there is much talk in the work of Henry Giroux, bell hooks, Mary Louise Pratt and others about 'empowering' students by giving them more of a 'voice' in class, this voice does not project very far into their own writing on the subject (Miller 1994; although see hooks 1994 p.19-20 & 196-7 for rare exceptions). Thus, the following account is intended to remedy this somewhat by drawing on the tensions between my attempts to 'run' this course and a range of student responses to this in the 1994-1995 academic year.⁽³⁾ Indeed, it is also important to emphasise that the course handout reproduced above was produced for the 1995-1996 class and shows, as I will explain, how the tensions which are almost bound to surface the first time such pedagogy is put into practice can be built upon to better organise the next time.

The 'Transatlantic' course was taught for the first time in 1993-1994 with a group of 13 students who were assessed through an unseen examination at the end of the course and who could choose to do journals as optional course work. The following year, a case had successfully been made for journals to be the compulsory form of assessment for the course (as well as for an 'Urban Geography' course taught by Tim Cresswell), and the class size had risen to 38 students. In the academic year 1994-1995, then, the 'Transatlantic' was going through a significant period of transition from a small seminar to a large group class, and from a traditionally examined to a journal-based course. As a result, these journals and the course in general became stressful for all concerned over this year. Yet, despite the inevitable teething problems, many students loved doing the course and its journals once they were underway, while others wished they hadn't risked it and a small minority took my stance as 'unprofessional'. To begin with, as the students started the course, perhaps most of them had little or no idea whether journal writing would suit them. Thus, in the course handout, I provided what I thought was ample information about what the course and its journals involved, and later provided a list of 'journal basics' (this was added to the following year's course handout, reproduced above) in response to requests for a more precise indication of what I was expecting. Also, as indicated in the handout, I continued to encourage students to hand in their journals as they were doing them so that I could comment on them and so that we could discuss them one-on-one in my office as the course progressed. Those who did this, I believe, benefited greatly, others did not need such contact, and still others did not keep up with the work and were left at the start of the second term with only a few notes on the first term's work at best.

One of the most pressing and persistent issues in the negotiation of these journals, however, was that I had to deal with a constant campaign which was waged in class, through the Department's Staff-Student Consultative Committee, and beyond about the way that I 'taught' this course. Early in the first term, a representative on this Committee came to see me to say that students in the class had asked him to ask me if journals could be offered as optional course work on top of a compulsory exam as before. When the class next met, I told them that this had happened and explained that I had not agreed to this because it went against the central philosophy of the course as explained in the handout which I had gone over in great detail a week or two before,

and this was met with gasps of amazement from some that this had been suggested at all. Later, after having been told in confidence by one student whom I knew quite well that *most* of the students were spending more time after class discussing how badly it had been run than discussing what they had learned, I convened a series of short meetings at the start of the second term with the class's seven reading groups in order to gain some feedback from all of them concerning how they were getting on with the course and their journals, and what suggestions they could offer to make these run more smoothly. Six of these meetings were, by and large, very constructive and I learned a great deal about what was 'going on' in the classroom and was surprised to find that it was going better than I expected and that those who had fallen behind took some responsibility for this.

The seventh meeting - with the group which included the student who had told me how badly the course was going - was far more tense and it was here that two particularly angry students confronted me with their grievances. First, they complained that the course hadn't been like the more conventional courses which they had taken with me in their second years which, they argued, had been much better organised; second, they complained that, when I had circulated the list of 'journal basics' quoted above, I had effectively *changed* the rules of the game rather than clarified them and that, if they had realised that this is what the journals would be like at the start of the course, they would not have taken it; and, third, one took issue with the instruction that each journal entry should be rooted in that week's lecture by arguing that, because I had also said that students could write 'anything they liked' and that she had found the early Columbus-based sessions to have nothing in them on which she had an opinion (she stated that concentrating on the past was counterproductive, and that the study of the present was all that mattered), she should not therefore have to write about them. I responded by arguing a) that the course outline had clearly explained what the course would involve and how different it would be to what they might be used to; b) that I had elaborated on this in the introductory session; c) that this was not a course with no rules, but one with a different set of rules which they had to keep to like any other course, d) that it was not my responsibility that they had not understood this given that the vast majority of their fellow classmates clearly had; e) that most of the readings I had made available for the Columbus sessions had argued that historicising the present was vital and that, if any student wanted to disagree with this, s/he would have to do so through critical readings of these papers rather than by simply dismissing the arguments; and f) that, out of the 38 students who I had met during that day, only two had these grievances - something which meant that, although I could take note of what they said, I did not have to act on it to change the course for everyone else. Yet, when it came to making changes in the course based on the suggestions made across these group discussions, the kinds of arguments made by these dissenting students were taken on board in that, for instance, I would make sure to explain more clearly to the whole class why and how historical writings were important to consider in our understandings of the present.

The tensions which erupted in this last meeting did not, however, go away but moved on to another level. Later that term, the 'Transatlantic' course, its teacher (strangely formalised as "I. Cook") and its journals became the subject of official debate by the Department's Staff-Student Consultative Committee after its third year representative posted a notice asking for topics of concern which he could bring to the meeting (Figure 1). In response to this request (in bold), he received ten responses, nine of which constituted a rather public debate about the how the course was going. In one way, I saw such debates as being part of the course as it has brought to the surface fundamental questions about teaching and learning practice. Given that a central aim of

3rd YEARS

Please write below anything you wish me to bring up at the next staff-student meeting.

Your Refec Lunch

JOURNALS - e.g. TRANSATLANTIC! Disproportionate workload bet. subjects.

Journals - better structured course (illegible) Biogeog + Ag + Environment as examples of good structure.

Could I. Cook not read out other people's work in his lectures!!

People keep moaning about I. Cook and his course journals. Well, what was the point of doing the course if you don't want to do the Journals (see above!!!)

Here here.

Didn't realise they were going to involve so much work - lack of info.

Try something constructive not bitchy.

WELL DONE TO I. COOK ON A GROOVY SET OF LECTURES!

Sad to see that a different & refreshing approach to course lectures is not critically acclaimed!!!

Figure 1. The student notice-board: a public forum for debating border pedagogy.

the course was to question the politics of academic knowledge, in a strange and quite disturbing way these kinds of heated debates showed how they had been very much brought home to both myself and to most, if not to all, of the students in the class. But, while this was going on, I could not hide my amazement and anger at this apparently concerted campaign to derail a course in which I had invested so much thought and effort. These emotions were not easy to hide in the classroom, either, as I struggled to keep to the principles of valuing the input of each student equally while trying not to give the disaffected students any reason to complain further about the way that I was running the show. Among other things, this led to a handful of those students who were enjoying the course and who knew how this 'campaign' was affecting me to try to take care of my emotional state by making sure that I knew when sessions had gone particularly well, when they had read something particularly interesting, or when they had been able to make particularly meaningful connections in their journals. Moreover, having guessed who these disruptive students might be, one told me how 'everyone' had been really impressed when I had calmly asked one of them to stop reading his newspaper while I was lecturing.

Finally, in order to encourage all of the students to more carefully think about the politics of the classroom both generally and in the context of what had happened in ours', I decided to use the concluding session of the course as a means to promote a discussion of 'border pedagogy' in our transatlantic course. Here, the students were each asked to come to class having read two of the four papers by Henry Giroux which I had made available in the library (i.e. Giroux 1991, 1992, 1994b; Giroux & Trend 1992) and, after a brief lecture by myself and Mary Baker (an Archaeologist/Historian at Lampeter who was drawing on similar ideas in her 'Gender Theory'

course), the reading groups which had been in operation throughout the course were mixed up so as to encourage students to talk to other class members whom they were not used to working with. Here, they were asked to think about and to discuss their responses to being 'on the end' of this kind of theory, and to conclude their journals and the course with this in mind. Below, to finish this section, I offer a range of these 'conclusions' and, while I acknowledge that these have obviously been written with my expected responses in mind and that the students who were most hostile to the course and the way that I had 'taught' it did not (and/or could not) use their readings of border pedagogical theory to explain why this was the case, I believe that these responses are sufficiently different and ambivalent to be taken notice of, particularly in the light of the seventh 'conclusion' which was appended to an *anonymous* course evaluation form handed in to the departmental office after the last class.

-i-

"Even though I am still a white Eurocentric Englishman, and still proud to be just that, I am now much more aware of how these categories are ideological constructions and potentially damaging, indeed inappropriate in a multicultural society which needs to place all of our 'selves' at a central position. There is no other option which is not inhumane, unequal or undemocratic. In my own personal experience the course has been a lesson in human morality and respect for all of mankind. As such, this, combined with Giroux's 'border pedagogy' idea means that the valuable information I have allowed myself to learn (I have not been 'taught') has been learnt in an 'open' way allowing for 'me' any 'my' position within the readings and writings I have undertook".

-ii-

"I was really excited at the prospect of writing a journal for this course instead of sitting an exam. I thought that it held a lot of potential for me to express how I felt without feeling confined by the chains of traditional academic writing. Henry Giroux (1992) talks of this type of teaching as giving the marginalised a chance to speak and as offering students a sense of identity, place and hope. I think that this couldn't be more true. Writing this journal has really made me think deeply about myself (not only about my class and gender, but about my whiteness too) and my connections to other marginalised peoples as far away as the Caribbean. Before I did this course, I thought that I had little or nothing in common with these people, but I soon realised through reading about their lives and their stories, that my own and my family's working class history had and does have so much in common with theirs. I found it fascinating and very positive also, to read about British working class radicals and black activists joining together in the 18th century to fight for each other's causes, as it made me realise that our cultures, although different, had been entwined way back in history. ... I feel that writing from a situated knowledge perspective is the only way to write. I have enjoyed writing the journal because it fully embraces this writing perspective. I feel that this way of writing and learning gives me more chance to get to grips with the knowledge and to explore it myself. It also makes me feel a part of this knowledge forming process and academia generally, instead of feeling alienated from it. ... I can see a lot of potential and hope for the future in this style of learning and writing. It lets everyone have their say, and use their own experiences to follow/find their own path to knowledge and understanding. I only wish that there had been courses like this one in my first year, and then maybe I wouldn't have felt so totally alienated and bitter towards academic teaching and writing. ... Nothing can ever be a case of 'them' and 'us' again, because I know that our cultures are part of one another and that our oppressions can have similarities".

-iii-

"Transatlantic has affected me more than any course I have ever done. Because it dealt with things so close to me personally it has forever altered the way I look at everything around me, whether I am shopping (I certainly won't be able to pass the exotic fruit section in Sainsbury's in the same way again), reading a newspaper or watching television. At the start of the course I wrote that I considered myself pretty right-on and radical, and although I certainly don't take that back I have been shown how much I had to learn, and have to learn".

-iv-

"I feel I have somehow got closer to other social and racial groups, something I may not have done without this particular style of teaching, forcing you to appreciate and 'feel' the readings and not just letting them wash over you until the exam. I have to admit that before I was more complacent, not really too concerned with political or social issues (only when I had to be, you could say), but I have certainly been shockingly drawn out of my rather dreamlike state. I shall never again see a Tarzan film or Disney cartoon in the same light again! I do feel, though, that we may have read too much into some parts of the course, perhaps seeing things that were not entirely present. But this is no bad thing, for it means that we are open to the readings, we can see deeper considerations".

-v-

"I feel that journals have been the best way of examining this course. By examining our ideas and feelings at the end of the year, quickly testing our answers to three questions, none of the debate, ideas and expansion of the mind would have taken place. Luckily, we didn't have to go away and learn our lecture notes, learn other people's ideas and expressions. No. Instead, we were allowed to expand our own minds, each week through the journal. No matter your style of writing, if you felt strongly enough about an issue, which you would come to do through enough reading of articles and through thinking through your thoughts, you would be able to fully express your ideas. ... the journal does not necessarily mean having the same argument as your examiner, unlike as in exams. It is personal and therefore as long as the argument is well presented with loads of evidence to support it, then it can not be wrong. ... The work done for exams more often than not goes straight out of the head after the exam has finished. Yes, plenty of work and time have gone into this journal, but I can still remember all my entries and feel I could go away and discuss them, tell others about the course. The content of my journal shall definitely be with me from now on".

-vi-

"I do wonder to what extent then people in the course have written what they believe. If there is someone who is fascist, racist or sexist to what extent would they dare write their views? We are all forced to question the existing social relationships ... yet have we taken this too far? From talking to others I found attitudes similar within the group and I am aware that I may be criticising myself for this but maybe this final self critical analysis is a good thing. It seemed that many were making judgements on the past and thus being too judgmental, were we not all again being told to think by forces within the classroom? Through conversations and lecturing would not all our critical judgements simply all become radical going against the established stories of our separate histories simply as that was expected? ... Maybe we were expected to think radically through our own judgements and thus come to the same opinions and ideas again 'dictated' to, that we should contest all knowledges, deconstruct it and form 'new' radical opinions. How

much of 'our' thought and 'our own' judgements were outside our power and how much of 'our own' emotions were expected of us as undergraduates?"

-vii-

"I feel that a separate sheet is necessary for (this) course (evaluation), I hope it is useful and not time wasting. First of all I would like to say that I am glad I took the course, and looking back over the last two years I found it the most challenging and enjoyable. However, I am afraid I did not always feel this way.

Initially I was fired up for the course, the ambiguity intrigued me especially after talking with those in the year above. None seemed to be able to give me one description of the course. It seemed to be something you loved or loathed. It intrigued me as did the idea of the journal and, as I said, I was fired up to start. At times I was confused, I'm not sure if this was due to the teaching style or whether it was down to me. At the time I felt not enough was said as to what I should put in the journal and in what form it should take. The idea of a journal was exciting but the actual practice of it was initially difficult. Again initially I found the unconventional way of 'lecturing', and the structure of the course unclear and incoherent. I felt I was unable to actually come out of the lecture and say that I know something, that I had learnt something. As for what to 'reflect' upon in the journal I was occasionally at a loss.

However, out of this I would like to say that even though initial confusion was heightened through talks with Ian, he was a tremendous help, advising if/when he could. There was a positive side to the course, not being fed piecemeal was, in hindsight, a good thing. As we had to think about it, work our way through academic papers I gained more. The result of this was our own thoughts, perceptions and feelings. Initially this was hard: it didn't feel academic. To a certain extent I am always aware for whom I am writing, I cannot be emotional in case this leads to non-academic writing, non-academic writing means a crap mark! Eventually I realised not so! The seeming lack of structure and traditional lecturing style allowed creativity, self reflection and a self teaching educating process rather than taking verbatim what someone else says and writing it in essays and/or exams what is expected. I feel that due to this, the course was taught exceptionally well, forcing us to teach ourselves although as I previously said I initially had my doubts, I enjoyed it once I had got into it. I found the lectures thought provoking and couldn't leave transatlantic behind. It followed me home and into my everyday life; watching TV, listening to radio, reading, etc.. I read into everything.

I found it has been the course that has taken up the most time. At times it has seemed too much, but I guess it was what you made of it. This is where it challenges convention: making you think and learn in new ways, with new ways of reading into things and deconstructing. In hindsight it was excellent, the lecturer helpful".

4. 'EMPOWERMENT' THROUGH JOURNAL WRITING?

Although I would obviously not claim to have negotiated the transitions which I began the previous section with in a particularly smooth way and, in this respect, feel that the 'Transatlantic' course and its journals were far from above criticism, in comparison with the experiences reported by other teachers who have attempted to put border pedagogy into practice, these and other

kinds of reaction (positive as well as negative) are quite common and can be seen as results of the re-alignment of power relations in the border classroom. As mentioned earlier, when it comes to talking about 'empowerment', the question should not be of whether a class do or do not become 'empowered' en *masse* as a result of such practice. Rather, as Linda McDowell (1994) has suggested, the 'empowerment' question should be one of if and how the power relations of the classroom can be re-aligned to make them more equitable, allowing students to have a more or less equal 'voice' through enabling more 'marginalised' students to speak/write their ways into educational settings in which their stories have rarely been told, through encouraging less marginalised students to 'unlearn their own privileges', and through promoting a classroom culture which allows all of the students to develop critically multicultural understandings of their 'differences' and how to work through them (Giroux 1991).

Yet, before talking about this in detail, it is important to point out how border pedagogy does not only result in (dis)empowerments *inside* the classroom because, as Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1994) has written, border *teachers* must simultaneously "combat the pressures of professionalization, normalization, and standardization {outside}, the very pressures of expectations that implicitly aim to manage and discipline pedagogies so that teacher behaviours are predictable (and perhaps controllable) across the board" (pp.153). Thus, to broaden out the concerns expressed in the previous section, it is important to consider how these practices and those students and teachers who (would like to) work through them are situated *between* various institutional settings. Here, two major themes can be identified from the recorded experiences of border teachers: first, there are reports of having difficulties in being taken 'seriously' by students, peers and/or by members of more distanced academic communities (e.g. staff hiring, and/or course validation, committees); and, second, concerns have also been expressed about how classes can be regulated so that these pedagogical practices do not become swamped by too many students and/or too heavy a workload for their teachers. Below, then, I outline these concerns, and my own experiences of dealing with these and, in doing so, continually return to what this word 'empowerment' can mean both for teachers and students under these circumstances.

In a conversation which, for me, gives the most vivid impression of what putting border pedagogy into practice can be like, Ron Scapp and bell hooks (1994) have discussed the problem of gaining respect in the departments where they have taught:

"RS: Colleagues say to me, 'Your students seem to be enjoying themselves, they seem to be laughing whenever I walk by, you seem to be having a good time.' And the implication is that you're a good joke-teller, you're a good performer, but no serious teaching is happening. Pleasure in the classroom is feared. If there is laughter, a reciprocal exchange may be taking place. You're laughing, the students are laughing, and someone walks by, looks in and says, 'OK, you're able to make them laugh.. But so what? anyone can entertain..' ... To prove your academic seriousness, students should be almost dead, quiet, asleep, not up, excited, and buzzing, lingering around the classroom.

bh: It is as though we are to imagine that knowledge is this rich creamy pudding students should consume and be nourished by, but not that the process of gestation should also be pleasurable. As a teacher working to develop liberatory pedagogy, I am discouraged when I encounter students who believe if there's a different practice they can be less committed, less disciplined. I think our fear of losing students' respect has discouraged many professors from trying new teaching practices" (pp.145).

The experience of such problems - of being seen not to act in a 'professional' way, not to (be able to) 'control' a class, and not to mention not teaching 'proper' disciplinary materials and devoting time and effort to teaching which should be spent on writing papers for publication in the right academic journals - can mean that teachers who may *already* have difficulties in being taken 'seriously' by students as well as colleagues find that pushing for the adoption of border pedagogical practices may simply add more fuel to this fire. Here, for instance, bell hooks (*ibid.*) has highlighted the experiences of the "Many feminist professors who begin their careers working to institutionalise more radical pedagogical practices, but when students did not appear to 'respect their authority' they felt these practices were faulty, unreliable, and returned to traditional practices" (pp.143). In the final 'Transatlantic' class of 1994-1995, Mary Baker told the students how she was wary of adopting the alternative teaching and assessment practices which they had 'enjoyed' because this would, very likely, have been taken by a number of unsympathetic colleagues in her departments as further 'evidence' of her 'loony', 'lesbian' and/or 'radical' feminist approach (see McDowell 1990, 1992; Moghissi 1994). And, although this kind of labelling and dismissal is one of the most pervasive ways in which voices have been silenced in geography (and other) departments to date, there are plenty of other ways for teachers to be labelled and marginalised because of what they research and teach and how they research and teach it. Obviously, this needs to be born in mind when considering the adoption of such approaches. So much, as usual, depends on the context.

These and other factors also have considerable bearing on the respect that teachers can gain and maintain in the classroom as a course progresses. Here, it is worth noting that 'proper' lecturing from behind the lectern does provide a form of security for both students and teachers. As Ron Scapp (in hooks 1994) has said:

"many (students) are already convinced that they cannot respond to appeals that they be engaged in the classroom, because they've already been trained to view themselves as not the ones in authority, not the ones with legitimacy. To acknowledge student responsibility for the learning process is to place it where it's least legitimate in their own eyes. When we try to change the classroom so that there is a sense of mutual responsibility for learning, students get scared that you are now not the captain working with them, but that you are after all just another crew member - and not a reliable one at that" (p.144).

Coming out into the classroom as more of a 'crew member' can also be disturbing for teachers when they begin to find out, much more personally, what students think and expect of them (see hooks 1994; Johnson 1994; Mohanty 1994; Mostern 1994). Given that border pedagogy is supposed to encourage a more 'personal' approach to academic work, and that this should develop through less formalised engagements between students and teachers, it is often the case that the former direct their arguments and enthusiasms to the latter in class (where, for instance, it is not unusual for students to stop to ask the teacher whether they are saying the 'right' thing in the middle of a discussion with each other) and, more so, in informal chats outside the classroom and in their journal writing.

Given this necessarily closer contact between students and their teachers, the value of individual discussions as the course goes on and how these relationships may develop 'differently' as a course progresses, what this can often lead to are the concerns voiced by students who feel somewhat out of this. So, as hooks (1994) has written, she has found that "In student journals ... there have always been complaints about the perceived special bonding between myself and

particular students" (pp.198). Thus, for some, connections can be made between how well other students 'get on' with the course and how well they 'get on' with the teacher on a personal level - making, perhaps, more room for students to dislike border courses because of 'personality clashes' with their teachers. As discussed in the previous section, these kinds of 'clashes' can often get worked through departmental committees and other more public forums but, sometimes, these and other clashes are voiced through students' journal writing. Challenges to my authority and legitimacy have, for instance, also been made by one student who, after the introductory lecture, expressed initial fears of a teacher whose 'Transatlantic' class had been deliberately designed to dismantle the ways in which students think about the world for purposes which could only be speculated about, while another argued that my use of the university and the 'pretentious academic bollocks' of academic discourse got in the way of describing the 'real world' and the social transformations that could and should take place there (slightly tongue-in-cheek, so far as I could tell, this student suggested that I should give up my job, learn to play the guitar, and become a protest singer). But, given that the politics of knowledge are a continual subject of discussion, and that there is a constant attempt to think about what happens in the classroom as part of this, these tensions can be folded back into the class so that "the conflicts that capture and construct both the students and their teachers (can) become the proper subject of study for the course" (Miller 1994 pp.396; hooks 1994). Therefore, one of the skills of border teaching is to see the possibilities of productively veering from any course outline you have provided in response to such conflicts. In the course outline quoted above, the students were told only that this was roughly what happened the last time the course ran and that this was more of a flavour of the *kind* of course that they could get involved in and less a rigid outline of what would happen to them.

This folding back process is a key to how border classes can and should develop between the teachers and students who constitute them, so that courses develop to suit their own contexts (the way that I have come to run the 'Transatlantic' course at Lampeter has developed *in situ* and, I'm fairly sure, could not be easily transferred to another institution without having to be significantly disrupted). Perhaps the best way to illustrate this is to discuss how the relationships which build up between students and teachers within and beyond the border classroom are by no means relationships which escape the politics of difference which such a course can be designed to address. The classrooms orchestrated by the teachers who have contributed to this border pedagogical debate have, importantly, been multi-cultural. I cannot be sure whether this reflects their location in, perhaps, a more obviously multi-cultural part of the world (all of them teach in North American universities) and/or in disciplines which perhaps attract students from more diverse backgrounds (none of them teach in Geography departments). In their classrooms, for instance, Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Cheryl Johnson have talked in detail about how they fit into this student body as black women teachers. As a result, Mohanty (1994) has argued how "many of my students ... construct me as a native informant in the same way that left-liberal white students sometimes construct all people of colour as the authentic voices of their people" (pp.153) while Johnson (1994) has echoed this and ambivalently described her position as a black woman teaching courses on the literature of black women writers. Here, Johnson has argued of her position in the class *vis à vis* black students that:

"What is clear ... is that despite a desire on the part of some blacks for a racial ideology - constructed as a defence against racism - which would unite African-Americans around common goals and ideals, various and sometimes dissonant perspectives frustrate attempts for intraracial unity. There is no monolithic black essence, and the very desire for such an essence can be

dangerous. ... (Yet) these notions, when positioned as the cultural and intellectual property of African-Americans, may actually empower black students who use their experiences of difference as sources of knowledge about black culture and literature. In the classroom, such experiences grant voice, authority, and authenticity to those who previously have been dismissed as irrelevant to American history and culture; on the other hand, these oral testaments to 'the black experience' may simultaneously silence those who do not share the same cultural background" (pp.416-417).

On a similar note concerning the 'empowerment' of more marginalised students, arguments have also been made that women students may find that writing from a 'situated knowledge' perspective (in journals, for instance) to be less of a jolt than for their male colleagues because they are more likely to keep personal journals anyway and, as Lila Abu-Lughod (1990) has written, "women's point of view is in some sense privileged because, like any subaltern view, it never could pretend that it wasn't a view from somewhere" (pp.15; Sellers 1988).

These examples can bring to the surface key questions not only of *who* teachers can and want to 'empower' in the classroom but also *how* they can and want to do this. Thus, below I want to develop the argument that a border pedagogy (with or without journals) involves the understanding of, and intervention in, fields of (dis)empowerment which *already exist*. No class contains students who are uniformly 'empowered' and, therefore, no 'empowerment' strategy will work for each student in the same way. Following the arguments of Henry Giroux, in particular, then, my aim in adopting this border pedagogy has been to promote a 'radically democratic' classroom in which (dis)empowerments are recognised and worked through as the course progresses. To illustrate this below, I want to talk about how I have dealt with a key difference between the classrooms discussed by the teachers cited above and the ones in which I teach: i.e. that each time I have taught the 'Transatlantic' course, I have been faced with students who, on a global scale, have been relatively 'empowered' through being white, middle class and British.(4) From their perspectives, too, they have been faced with someone 'empowered' through having much the same kind of background as well as being in the position of authority by virtue of being their 'lecturer': the person who will mark their work.

Using a pedagogy intended to address multi-culturalism, in this context I have had to work against taken-for-granted constructions of a white ethnic 'we' in the classroom who are there to study 'our' Black Atlantic 'others'. To do this, I have adopted a two tier approach which involves, first, starting the course by questioning the idea of 'difference' in a way that is sensitive to who is in the classroom and, second, ending the class through discussions of the border pedagogy literature which suggests why they/we are in higher education and others are not. The second point has already been discussed in the opening section of this paper but, to elaborate on the first, the course begins with a discussion of the either/or binaries of Western tradition mentioned at the start of this paper, and I then direct students to readings which challenge the taken-for-granted 'normality' of 'whiteness' (e.g. Dyer 1988, Frankenburg 1993; hooks 1992; Jeater 1992; Jones 1988; Pile 1994; Ware 1992). This challenge is maintained throughout the course by relating 'whiteness' to other taken-for-granted 'normalities' in Western tradition such as masculinity through which women class members will more than likely have felt oppressed, of heterosexuality through which gay class members will more than likely have felt oppressed, of middle-classness through which working class students will more than likely have felt oppressed, of 'Englishness' through which Welsh and other students will more than likely have felt oppressed, and to combinations of these, in order to highlight these and other 'differences' in the classroom

and to emphasise an infinite web of alliances which can go beyond any 'common sense' of identity (see Bonnett 1992). Moreover, I have also taken on the argument put by Philip Crang (1992) that polyphony (or in the case above, 'multi-cultural dialogue') is not an alien concept to students in even the most homogeneous classroom because, outside, s/he will more than likely be involved in tutorials, seminars, and informal discussions with plenty of other people, will no doubt have an 'outside life' (involving often very different places and communities in which they have grown up and return to in the holidays, as well as what they have read in the papers, seen on the TV, and so on) and may have found it very difficult to avoid reading book and articles written by a wide range of authors as an essential part of their studies.

Thus, two complementary ways of bringing critically multi-cultural discourses into and out of even the most apparently mono-cultural student body are, first, to encourage the identification and drawing in (by both students and teachers) of relevant outside experiences for discussion both in class and in journal writing and, second, to provide a 'community' of set and optional readings written by authors who are positioned (historically, geographically and otherwise) throughout the world which is their subject of study. In the classrooms which I have attempted to orchestrate, the 'voices' which therefore come together are not simply those of students who are present in an introverted sense (i.e. to summarise the readings set for that class and to talk about them as if they were only supposed to make sense in that class at that time), but are those of students present in these extroverted senses (i.e. to talk about what they have found interesting and important in these readings and what aspects of these readings have made them think about in the contexts of their own lives). This latter sense is precisely what the course is supposed to encourage and, based on the student 'conclusions' quoted above, appears to have 'worked' in the majority of cases. Moreover, with the stress that is placed on doing set readings for class discussions, listening to other students talking about what they have read, and following this up with other readings in preparation for their journal entries, the teacher's 'voice' becomes far from the only one which they have to listen to. So, the anxiety which teachers may experience as a result of coming out from behind the lectern can become dissipated through orchestrating the classroom in such a way that s/he is not directly responsible for inspiring the students but for preparing the ground which will allow students to inspire themselves through building their own understandings through their reading, debating and writing. Indeed, in arguing that I am less the teacher and more the learner in the classroom alongside them (as Ron Scapp has argued above) as well as in trying to dissipate any expectation that any class hangs entirely on how I 'perform', in response to student assumptions I have found that it is useful to state that I did not, first, invent this course and its politics and, *then*, go out to find the readings to back my ideas up. Rather, the course was constructed out of a period of sustained research in which I learned a great deal from my own journey through the 'connections and unexpected openings' which they inspired and that this journey is far from over.

Having said all of this, whatever any teacher may think about border pedagogy in principle, its possibilities are very much limited by the amount of time and effort s/he can and wants to put into this - something which is, in particular, affected by how many students are likely to take a class where this is adopted. Here, again, the conversation between Ron Scapp & bell hooks (in hooks 1994) is worth taking note of:

"RS: ... professors and students alike are afraid to challenge (convention), because that would mean more work. Engaged pedagogy is physically exhausting!"

bh: And that's partly about numbers. Even the best, most engaged classroom can fail under the weight of too many people. That's really been a problem for me in my teaching career. As I've become more committed to liberatory pedagogical practices, my classrooms have become just too large. So those practices are undermined by sheer numbers. Rebelling against that has meant insisting on limits in classroom size. Overcrowded classes are like overcrowded buildings - the structure can collapse" (pp.160).

After giving an earlier version of this paper at the GENE conference (see note 1), a number of other delegates reminded me of my relatively luxurious position of having classes which were small enough for border pedagogy to work effectively. For me, class size has not yet become a problem as I have never had to teach more than 43 'Transatlantic' students at once (the present 1995-1996 class) - a figure which I have found that I can just about manage with six groups of around seven students each who, in the second half of our two-hour sessions, are asked to summarise their discussions about the set readings on blackboards in preparation for a class-wide discussion which I try to orchestrate between them. I cannot comment, then, on how this approach might work with more than this number of students or, as hooks mentions above, how the limitation of class size can be negotiated with colleagues to allow this kind of pedagogy to be introduced in departments where larger class sizes are the norm.

But, despite being able to enjoy such small numbers, like Scapp and hooks I have found that effectively running a border classroom is a rather exhausting task. First, although the onus has been much more on the students to make things happen by reading for class and for their journals, this has had to be based on my knowledge of appropriate literatures and my making it freely available for them to read. Thus, over the past two years, I have spent a great deal of time making multiple photocopies of over 200 book chapters and articles, stapling them into folders, negotiating their cataloguing on short term loan by library staff, and filling up massive amounts of shelf-space in the library with what have become well-used 'Transatlantic' readings - something which, up until these were bar-coded during the summer of 1995, also noticeably increased the work-load of the staff concerned. Theoretically, then, no students can come to class unprepared for the discussion because they cannot find the reading. Second, in response to student comments half way through the 1994-1995 course that, sometimes, it was so 'flexible' that no particularly coherent thread could be followed from week to week, I have also spent a considerable amount of time constructing weekly handouts which contain a) each session's title and a series of quotations from key readings which are intended to give a flavour of the debates which will be engaged with that week, b) a statement of 'aims' for that session which shows this as a development from what was covered in the previous session, c) what this following session will involve in terms of lecture and discussion time, d) a list of set readings which their groups should be prepared to discuss in class, e) a list of supplementary readings which should provide means for them to develop the interests and concerns brought to and taken from that class, and f) any further information which is relevant that week (the timing and placing of supplementary film shows, administrative issues, etc..).(5)

Third, considerable time has also been taken up through informal discussions about, and assessments of, students' individual journals-in-progress. Because a) these journals have to be compromises between the basic criteria which I have set and what experiences, interests, concerns and enthusiasms which students bring to and develop through them, and b) journal writing is something which takes time for most students to develop a style for, I have felt it necessary to encourage them to visit my office on an informal basis and to hand in their journals as often as

they like for feedback. Here, I have tried to think through with individual students how such compromises can be reached for them, to suggest readings which will allow them to develop their interests and concerns more directly, to give some kind of reassurance to those who feel uneasy about how and what they want to and have written, and to keep informal tabs on how the course is 'going', week by week. Despite this, I have found that, however much I have stressed this, by no means all of the students have visited me regularly and by no means all of the students hand in their journals as they go along for comment. Yet, reading these journal fragments, making these comments, and having these conversations have taken noticeable but often highly rewarding chunks out of my working week.

While some of the above is one-off work which I will only have to modify in the future, much of this is repeat work and none more so than the assessment of the journals at the end of the course where a number of problems inevitably arise. First, there is the problem with the length of this work which, so far, has resulted in journals which are all at least dissertation length. This meant that, with 38 journals to assess at the end of the 1994-1995 academic year, I had landed myself with an extremely heavy marking load in comparison with the 38 examination scripts which might otherwise have come in. After reporting this to the subsequent examiners meeting that year, suggestions were made about the possibility of imposing of a word limit for this work. This, I argued at the time, was against the principles of border pedagogy because there has to be enough room for students to really get their teeth into the issues which they think are important without worrying if they have written too much. In my experience, the journals which took the longest to grade were either those where the student hadn't paid much attention to what they were supposed to have done or where meanings were difficult to disentangle from writing styles. As illustrated in the 1995-1996 course outline quoted above, to take some of the pressure off the students and to reduce my own marking load, all I have done is to ask for one entry to be written each fortnight, rather than each week as before.

It is not just the amount of marking which can cause problems for the border teacher, however. Perhaps much more pressing is the question of how work in which students develop their own situated knowledges through a course can be marked can be judged by the teacher who has encouraged this as 'better' or 'worse' developments than others. This is perhaps the most obvious means through which teachers exercise power over their students, and students know this all too well. A return to the conversation between Ron Scapp & bell hooks (in hooks 1994), though, can begin to help us to think about how the border *marker* might approach his or her work:

bh: When I enter the classroom at the beginning of the semester the weight is on me to establish that our purpose is to be, for however brief a time, a community of learners *together*. It positions me as a learner. But I'm also not suggesting that I don't have more power. And I'm not trying to say that we are all equal here. I'm trying to say that we are all equal here to the extent that we are equally committed to creating a learning context.

RS: That's right. That returns us to the issue of respect. Sure, it's bad faith to pretend that we're all the same because the teacher's the one who ultimately is going to grade. In traditional terms that *is* the source of power, and judging is something we all do as teachers. That's not really the source of power in the successful classroom. The power of the liberatory classroom is in fact the power of the learning process, the work we do to establish a community. ...

bh: I want (the students) to think, 'What I'm here for is to work with the material, and to work with it in the best way that I can. And in doing that I don't have to be fearful about my grade, because if I am working the best I can with this material, I know it's going to be reflected in my

grade.' I try to communicate that their grade is something which they can control with their labour.

RS: I think that's a really important point. Many students feel that they couldn't presume to evaluate their own work positively. Someone else will decide how well and how hard they are working. And so there is already a devaluation of their own effort. Our task is to empower students so that they have the power to assess their academic growth properly.

bh: The obsession with good grades has so much to do with fear of failure. Progressive teaching tries to eradicate that fear, both in students and in professors" (pp.153 &157-158).

Here, I feel, Scapp and hooks have approached some key points in terms of the border teachers' exercising of her/his 'power' in the classroom and how students can become 'empowered' as a result of this.

The first point to note that students can become *individually* '(dis)empowered' through the grades which they achieve via their teacher's assessment of their journals. Echoing hooks' phrase above, this was expressed well by the 'Transatlantic' student in the previous section who wrote that "No matter your style of writing, if you felt strongly enough about an issue, which you would come to do through enough reading of articles and through thinking through your thoughts, you would be able to fully express your ideas. ... the journal does not necessarily mean having the same argument as your examiner, unlike as in exams. It is personal and therefore as long as the argument is well presented with loads of evidence to support it, then it can not be wrong". Thus, in 1994-1995, the students who were awarded the poorer marks in the class were those who had not fulfilled the basic requirements for the journal as much as others. For example, many had not read enough to take their ideas very far, their arguments were relatively unsubstantiated or difficult to understand, entries were missing and/or they had not been able to get into writing as if they were involved in issues which they discussed. These were judgements which were based on the criteria which were set at the start of the course and which were made more specific later on and, although these may seem somewhat limiting, it does seem to me that there have to be common criteria by which all students' work is judged. I try to emphasise that journals are not 'free-for-alls' where students can write anything that they like, or that all 'voices' have equal value regardless of what they are saying and how they are saying it and that, therefore, I cannot assess their work. Rather, I treat journals as a somewhat strange combination of the 'academic' and the 'personal' in which students must construct coherent and convincing arguments - in the context of what the core concepts of border research are supposed to be about and *in dialogue* with the readings which they have done and so on - which show what they have *learned* from the course, not just what they think off the cuff.

There is, however, another way of thinking about the notion of 'empowerment' through journal writing which is reflected in almost all of the student comments quoted in the previous section. This is that students can become 'empowered' more *collectively* through the skills which they develop which can allow them to be more informed and critical citizens of a multi-cultural 'British' or other society. This is a kind of 'empowerment' which works relatively independently of students' grades although a certain amount of engagement with readings and other outside material is essential for this to be developed. Here, it is important to note that only one of the students whose journals have been quoted above gained a first class grade in the course. And, as for the concerns expressed by one student about how a fascist, racist or sexist student would take this class, I would be extremely depressed if they became a more 'empowered' fascist, racist or sexist person through this course as it, and the mass of academic work on which it is based, is

specifically intended to work against this. For those who want to express these views, all I ask is that they do so through engaging with the set and supplementary readings and argue in the way set out by the students above.

5. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Overall, I think that for most of the students in this 'Transatlantic' class, the border pedagogical approach has provided an opportunity not only to enjoy the relative freedom to set their own learning agendas, to be creative and experimental in their writing, and to contribute in a very meaningful way to the development of the course but also, through constantly being encouraged to question and to write through their own understandings of the world around them and their place within it, many have reported that it has made them into more eloquent debaters and into much more critical thinkers - they couldn't get away from the relevant course materials outside the classroom. For these students, the course has been hard work with often difficult materials, but has been worth the effort in the end and, for me, this is what the course was supposed to be about, the journals have been central to this, and therefore they can be considered to be a great success. I believe that journals are a highly appropriate and valuable pedagogical device for this kind of course and that they have allowed sometimes quite astonishingly 'advanced' arguments to be developed by students because they mattered to them. Moreover, I feel that they have 'empowered' certain students who have been unhappy about having to take part in traditionally more abstract academic debates in courses assessed by examinations. The students who did the best on the course were not traditionally those who would do so and many who had done well in other courses through writing more in the third person found the 'personal/academic' combination here hard to deal with.

By no means would I recommend that all teachers in all departments could or should adopt such border pedagogy in preference to any other form of teaching practice, though. Rather, it seems to me that this can be one of a valuable range of approaches which could allow Departments to offer students a wider choice not only in what they learn, but in how they learn it. Although most of the 'Transatlantic' students appreciated the opportunities which this border pedagogy afforded them, most would have been horrified by the prospect of more than a few courses being offered in this way throughout their degrees. For the teacher who may be considering the adoption of such practices in the future, all I can say is that - quite unsurprisingly - your context will be everything. Border pedagogy 'worked' for me (and for the students involved) because a) I am in a position of sufficient power that I can undermine my own authority without too much trouble; b) I teach a course whose academic underpinnings are highly compatible with those of border pedagogy; c) I teach in an institution where class sizes and teaching commitments do not make this kind of project practically impossible; d) journal-based courses were more easily introduced at Lampeter in the lead-up to the Teaching Quality Assessment visit in October 1994 in response to the emphasis which had been placed in HEFCW documents on the need to offer a diversity of teaching and examination procedures; and e) these courses subsequently gained legitimacy after passing through 'quality assurance' mechanisms such as Staff-Student Consultative Committees and External Examiners. However, what has perhaps been the most powerful means to legitimate this kind of 'teaching and assessment' is the burgeoning literature on 'border pedagogy' which I have tried to summarise above. This not only allows those who would consider introducing such practices to argue that they are building on an established pedagogical approach and are not simply making up courses, willy-nilly, as they go along, but also prepares them to negotiate the joys, difficulties and workloads which inevitably arise from putting this pedagogy into practice.

Following on the heels of the paper by Linda McDowell (1994) with which I began, then, one of my aims in writing this one has been to provide both a legitimation for, as well as an assessment of, what can be both a seriously worrying and a seriously exciting approach to teaching and learning geography.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND NOTES

- Abu-Lughod, L. (1990) "Can there be a feminist ethnography." *Women & Performance* 5(1) pp.7-27.
- Agyeman, J. (1993) "Alien spaces." *Museums journal* December, pp.22-23.
- Baden-Powell, R. (1930) *Rovering to success: a book of life-sport for young men*. (London: Jenkins).
- Baden-Powell, R. (1953) *Scouting for Boys: boy's edition* (first abridged edition. London: Pearson).
- Benítez Rojo, A. (1992) *The repeating island: the Caribbean and the postmodern perspective*. (London: Duke University Press).
- Boff, L. & Elizondo, V. (eds) (1990) *1492-1992: the voice of the victims*. (London: SCM Press).
- Bonnett, A. (1992) "Anti-racism in 'white' areas: the example of Tyneside." *Antipode* 24(1), pp.1-15.
- Brambleby, A. (1973) *The brownie guide handbook*. (London: Girl Guides Association).
- Burton, J. (1992) "Don (Juanito) Duck and the imperial-patriarchal unconscious: Disney studies, the good neighbour policy, and the packaging of Latin America." pp. 21-41 in A. Parker, M. Russo, D. Sommer & P. Yaeger (eds.) *Nationalisms & sexualities*. (London: Routledge).
- Carey-Webb, A. (1993) "Heart of Darkness, Tarzan, and the 'Third World': canons and encounters in world literature." *College literature* 20(1), pp.121-141.
- Cook, I. & Crang, M. (1995) *Doing ethnographies*. CATMOG 58. (London: Institute of British Geographers).
- Cooper, C. (1993) *Noises in the blood: orality, gender & the 'vulgar' body of Jamaican popular culture*. (Basingstoke: Macmillan).
- Coster, G. (1991) "Another country." *Weekend Guardian* June 1, pp.4-6.
- Cox, C. (1993) *Chocolate unwrapped: the politics of pleasure*. (London: Women's Environmental Network).
- Crang, P. (1992) "The politics of polyphony: reconfigurations in geographical authority." *Society & space* 10, pp.527-549.
- Dyer, R. (1988) "White." *Screen* 29(4) pp.44-64.
- Ferguson, M. (ed.) (1993) *The history of Mary Prince, a West Indian slave, related by herself*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press).

- Frankenburg, R. (1993) "Growing up white: feminism, racism and the social geography of childhood." *Feminist review* 45, pp.51-84.
- Fryer, P. (1984) *Staying power: the history of black people in Britain*. (London: Pluto).
- Fryer, P. (1993) *Aspects of British Black history*. (London: Index Books)
- Fusco, C. (1994) "The other history of intercultural performance." *The drama review* 38(1), pp.143-167.
- Fuson, R. (ed.) (1987) *The log of Christopher Columbus*. (Southampton: Ashford Press).
- Gilroy, P. (1987) *'There ain't no black in the union jack': the cultural politics of 'race' and nation*. (London: Routledge).
- Gilroy, P. (1992) "Cultural studies and ethnic absolutism." pp.187-198 in L. Grossberg, C. Nelson, & P. Treichler (eds.) *Cultural studies*. (London: Routledge).
- Gilroy, P. (1993a) *The black atlantic: modernity & double consciousness*. (London: Verso).
- Gilroy, P. (1993b) *Small acts: thoughts on the politics of black cultures*. (London: Serpent's Tail).
- Giroux, H. & McLaren, P. (eds.) (1994) *Between borders: pedagogy & the politics of cultural studies*. (London: Routledge).
- Giroux, H. & Trend, D. (1992) "Cultural workers, pedagogy & the politics of difference: beyond cultural conservatism." *Cultural studies* 6(1), pp.51-72.
- Giroux, H. (1991) "Democracy & the discourse of cultural difference: towards a politics of border pedagogy." *British journal of sociology of education* 12(4), pp.501-519.
- Giroux, H. (1992) "Resisting difference: cultural studies & the discourse of critical pedagogy." pp.199-212 in L. Grossberg, C. Nelson & P. Treichler (eds.) *Cultural studies*. (London: Routledge).
- Giroux, H. (1994a) *Disturbing pleasures: learning popular culture*. (London: Routledge).
- Giroux, H. (1994b) "Insurgent multiculturalism & the promise of pedagogy." pp.325-343 in D.T. Goldberg (ed.) *Multiculturalism: a critical reader*. (Oxford: Blackwells).
- Hall, C. (1992) *White, male & middle class: explorations in feminism & history*. (Cambridge: Polity).
- Haraway, D. (1988) "Situated knowledges: the science question in feminism & the privilege of partial perspective." *Feminist studies* 14(23), pp.575-599.
- Harvey, D. (1993) "Class relations, social justice & the politics of difference." pp.41-66 in M. Keith & S. Pile (eds.) *Place & the politics of identity*. (London: Routledge).

- Hebdige, D. (1987) *Cut 'n' mix: culture, identity & Caribbean music*. (London: Routledge).
- hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to transgress: education & the practice of freedom*. (London: Routledge).
- hooks, b. (1992) "Representations of whiteness in the black imagination." pp.165-178 in her *Black looks: race & representation*. (London: Turnaround).
- Hulme, P. (1986) *Colonial encounters: Europe and the native Caribbean*. (London: Routledge).
- Hulme, P. & Jordanova, L. (eds) (1990) *The Enlightenment & its shadows*. (London: Routledge).
- James, C.L.R. (1938) *The black jacobins*. (London: Allison & Busby).
- Jeater, D. (1992) "Roast beef & reggae music." *New formations*, Winter pp.107-121.
- Johnson, C. (1994) "Participatory rhetoric & the teacher as racial/gendered subject." *College English* 56(4), pp.409-419
- Jones, S. (1988) *Black culture, white youth: the reggae tradition from JA to UK*. (Basingstoke: Macmillan).
- Katz, C. (1992) "All the world is staged: intellectuals and the projects of ethnography." *Environment & planning D: society & space* 10, pp.495-510.
- Lie, S. (1988) "Pour une lecture féminine?" pp.196-203 in S. Sellers (ed.) *Writing differences: readings from the seminar of Hélène Cixous*. (Milton Keynes: Open University Press).
- Linebaugh, P. & Rediker, M. (1990) "The many-headed hydra: sailors, slaves, and the Atlantic working class in the eighteenth century." *Journal of historical sociology* 3(3), pp.225-252.
- Linebaugh, P. (1982) "All the Atlantic mountains shook." *Labour/Le Travailleur* 10, pp.87-121.
- Linebaugh, P. (1991) "Jubilating; or, how the Atlantic working class used the biblical jubilee against capitalism, with some success." *Radical history review* 50, pp.143-180.
- Mani, L. (1992) "Cultural theory, colonial texts: reading eyewitness accounts of widow burning." pp.392-408 in L. Grossberg, C. Nelson & P. Treichler (eds) *Cultural studies*. (London: Routledge).
- Marcus, G. & Fischer, M. (1986) *Anthropology as cultural critique; an experimental moment in the human sciences*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Marcus, G. (1986) "Contemporary problems of ethnography in the modern world system." pp.165-193 in J. Clifford & G. Marcus (eds.) *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography*. (Los Angeles & Berkeley: University of California Press)

- Marcus, G. (1992) "Past, present and emergent identities: requirements for ethnographies of late twentieth-century modernity worldwide." pp.309-330 in S. Lasch & J. Friedman (eds.) *Modernity and identity*. (Oxford: Blackwells).
- Massey, D. (1991) "A global sense of place." *Marxism Today* June, pp.24-29.
- Massey, D. (1992) "A place called home?." *New formations* 17, pp.3-15.
- Massey, D. (1995) "Places and their pasts." *History workshop journal* 39, pp. 182-192.
- McCalman, I. (ed) (1991) *The horrors of slavery and other writings by Robert Weddeburn*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press).
- McDowell, L. (1994) "Polyphony & pedagogic authority." *Area* 26(3), pp.241-248.
- McDowell, L. (1992) "Doing gender: feminism, feminists & research methods in human geography." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 17, pp.399-416.
- McDowell, L. (1990) "Sex & power in academia." *Area* 22(4), pp.323-332.
- McLaren, P. (1994) "Multiculturalism & the post-modern critique: toward a pedagogy of resistance & transformation." pp.192-222 in Giroux, H. & McLaren, P. (eds.) (1994) *Between borders: pedagogy & the politics of cultural studies*. (London: Routledge).
- Miller, R. (1994) "Fault lines in the contact zone." *College English* 56(4), pp.389-408.
- Minh-ha, T. (1986-7) "Difference: 'a special third world women issue'." *Discourse* 8, pp.11-38.
- Moghissi, H. (1994) "Racism & sexism in academic practice: a case study." pp.222-234 in Afshar, H. & Maynard, M. (eds.) *The dynamics of 'race' & gender: some feminist interventions*. (London: Taylor & Francis).
- Mohanty, C. (1994) "On race & voice: challenges for liberal education in the 1990s." pp.145-166 in Giroux, H. & McLaren, P. (eds.) (1994) *Between borders: pedagogy & the politics of cultural studies*. (London: Routledge).
- Mohanty, S. (1989) "Us and them: on the philosophical bases of political criticism." *Yale journal of criticism* 2(2) pp.1-31.
- Morton, W. (1993) "Tracking the sign of Tarzan: trans-media representation of a pop-culture icon." pp.106-125 in P. Kirkham & J. Thumim (eds.) *You Tarzan: masculinity, movies & men*. (London: Lawrence & Wishart).
- Newsinger, J. (1986) "Lord Greystoke & darkest Africa: the politics of the Tarzan stories." *Race & class* XXVIII, 2 pp.59-71.
- Pagden, A. (ed.) (1992) *A short account of the destruction of the Indies*. (by Bartolomé de las Casas, and first published in 1552) (Harmondsworth: Penguin).

Patterson, O. (1969) *The sociology of slavery: an analysis of the origins, development & structure of negro slave society in Jamaica*. (London: Associated University Presses).

Pile, S. (1994) "Masculinism, the use of dualistic epistemologies and third spaces." *Antipode* 26(3) pp.255-277.

Pratt, M.L. (1991) "Arts of the contact zone." *Profession* 91, pp.33-40.

Ramamurthy, A. (1990) "Museums & the representation of black history" *Museums journal* 90(9) pp.23-35.

Roberts, S. (1993) "'The lady in the tutti-frutti hat': Carmen Miranda, a spectacle of ethnicity." *Cinema Journal* 32(3) p.3-23.

Rose, C. (1990) *Living in America: the soul saga of James Brown*. (London: Serpent's Tail).

Sellers, S. (1988) "Introduction to 'Implications for teaching'." pp.187-189 in her (ed.) *Writing differences: readings from the seminar of Hélène Cixous*. (Milton Keynes: Open University Press).

Sistren Theatre Collective (1986) *Lionheart gal: life stories of Jamaican women*. (London: Women's Press).

Tawadros, G. (1988) "Other Britains, Other Britons." *Aperture* 113, pp.41-46.

Torgovnick, M. (1990) *Gone primitive: savage intellects, modern lives*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

Ware, V. (1992) *Beyond the pale: white women, racism & history*. (London: Verso).

(1) An earlier version of this paper was presented at the GENE Workshop on 'Empowerment in Teaching Geography', at Nene College on July 11th, 1995. Thanks go to the other delegates for their constructive responses and for making me situate the approach outlined here in a wider pedagogical context. I owe a great debt to those staff and, particularly, students at Lampeter who, over the 1993/4 and 1994/5 academic years, put so much faith and energy into this 'Transatlantic' experiment. Here, Mike Walker, Caron McKee, Mary Baker and Dennis Cosgrove deserve special thanks for steering me through the most difficult bits. Thanks also go to Susi Wells, Duncan Reid, Rachel Saltmarsh, Mark Arnold, Dan Philipps, Kirsty Milwain and Zoe Howse for allowing me to quote from their work and for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper. Overall, no hosiery could have been more supportive. Finally, a considerably shortened version of this paper is forthcoming in the *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*. More thanks go to the anonymous reviewers who suggested its pruning. Some of their suggestions have been taken on board, here, and more are on the way.

(2) Here students were presented with primary and secondary sources such as the following: Baden-Powell 1930, 1953; Boff & Elizondo 1990; Brambleby 1973; Burton 1992; Carey-Webb 1993; Cooper 1993; Cox 1993; Ferguson 1993; Fusco 1994; Fuson 1987, Hebdige 1987; Hulme 1986; Hulme & Jordanova 1990; Jones 1988; McCalman 1991; Morton 1993; Newsinger 1986; Pagden 1992; Patterson 1969; Ramamurthy 1990; Roberts 1993; Rose 1990; Sistren Theatre Collective 1986; Torgovnick 1990.

(3) In the spirit of producing a far more polyphonic text than the one offered here, a class 'Transatlantic' paper is currently in the early stages of preparation. The value of producing such a text was discussed with all the students half way through the 1994/1995 course and, at its end, the students were asked more formally if they would consent to their journals being drawn upon in a paper which I would co-ordinate. The aim of this paper was not to focus on how the course 'worked' - as this paper does - but, through a process of writing, consultation, rewriting and so on, to bring together and to juxtapose the various situated 'Transatlantic' knowledges/differences which were developed in this years' lectures and student journals.

(4) To give a more detailed, but still very rough impression of the diversity within these classes, of the 93 students who have taken the 'Transatlantic' so far - including those in 1995-1996 - 92 have been 'white' and one 'black'; 45 have been 'men' and 48 'women'; 87 have been 'British', one 'Canadian', two 'Swedish' and two 'Irish'; and, based on other positionalities which students have argued from in their journals, at least one has been gay and at least three have been working-class. However, given that these latter figures reflect facets of students' identities which usually emerge only in journal writing and that the 42 students in the current class have far from completed these, they are a reflection of the diversity among the 51 students who took the course in the first two years. Moreover, it is important to note that a great many students may a) be unwilling to talk through certain aspects of their identity in a document to be read by their lecturer and, b) be ambivalently positioned in terms of their class, sexuality, nationality, 'race' and so on (a central argument in the course which I encourage students to talk about in their journals).

(5) These are perhaps the best indication of what such a course can be 'about' as they show how a course can progress from week to week, how its horizons are set out and how student enthusiasms, concerns and interests can be acted upon to change these from week to week. Should any reader of this paper be sufficiently curious to want their own 1995-1996 'box set' of these weekly sheets for the 'Transatlantic' course, I would be happy to supply this.