Lessons Learned

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I had the opportunity in the Alliance Scholar Lecture, and again last year in the McCloy lecture, to describe the research programs that my students, colleagues, and I have pursued over the past quarter century. No need to cover that territory again. Instead, what I will do is reflect on some of the forces that have shaped who I have become as a scholar and a professional educator. The stories I’ll relate to you have been lessons for me, events and influences that shaped the values and substance of my scholarship. I do not mean to imply, nor do I want you to infer, that these lessons pertain to who you are becoming. Since my faithful reading of the Educational Researcher tells me that storytelling is an acceptable form of research reporting, I managed to convince myself that to take this direction this evening was appropriate for the SIG scholar lecture.

Lesson 1: Have and use an explanatory system — be part of a tradition.

Actually this is a group of small lessons about the explanatory systems one uses to make sense of the world in general and research data in particular, what Tom Kuhn (1970), in the Structure of Scientific Revolutions, described as traditions. Traditions develop among “a group of scholars who agree among themselves on the nature of the universe they are examining, on legitimate questions and problems to study, and legitimate techniques to seek solutions” (Jacob, 1987, pp. 1-2). Scholarly traditions rest on basic assumptions guiding explanations of behavior and culture. I start with this because I think it is the lesson that has been most important to my scholarship.

The first lesson I learned was that one should have a basic set of assumptions used to explain events; that is, the first lesson of explanatory systems is “Have One!” This is a lesson I learned gradually. The initial influence that took me in this direction was a quality undergraduate education in a Christian liberal arts college. My friends and I had endless late night debates about a host of topics, and several of my classmates interpreted everything in terms of their Christian faith and the particular theological positions of the Dutch reformed church. This was really new to me—both learning about theological systems and, more important, discoursing with people who in their arguments consistently referred to basic principles.

Another of these lessons occurred during my first summer of doctoral work at Indiana University in the mid-60s. Brent Rushall, one of the veteran doctoral students, was a bright Australian who was quite vocal in classes and in the graduate

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student lounge. I recall in the very first week of classes that summer asking another student about him, and prominent in the description was “He’s a Skinnerian.” I didn’t have a clue what that meant, but I did understand that he stood for something, that his views were identifiable in reference to a known system and that the tenets of that system influenced how he explained things. I also realized that an ambitious young graduate student like me ought to aspire to be something also. Mind you, at that time, intellectual life in the social sciences required that you be a devotee of a person’s work—the world into which I was socialized intellectually was filled with Rogerians, Piagetians, neo-Freudians, Adlerians, and the like.

The third part of this lesson was learned in a lecture I heard at one of my first Association for Behavior Analysis conferences. Ogden Lindsley, the creator of Precision Teaching—Crazy Og as he is known in behavior analysis—gave a lecture about avoiding eclecticism, which he defined as having your feet firmly planted in midair. He argued that if one’s explanatory system had any value, it can and should be useful in any circumstance. One might examine very different research questions, and even use very different research methodologies to collect data, but the explanatory system used to make sense of the data should be consistent.

A fourth part of this lesson was to understand your explanatory system, warts and all, and to seek out its weaknesses, to seek out and take seriously its critics. I probably learned this from having adopted a radical behavioral explanatory system and always being in the minority—often a minority of one—among colleagues who were devoted to very different systems. You have to understand that in the late ’60s and early ’70s, when I left coaching to start an academic career, to rely on an explanatory system that was wholly deterministic, disallowed teleological explanations, and was grounded in the fundamental belief that human behavior was part of the natural world, and therefore amenable to naturalistic explanations, ran counter to prevailing views in education and the social sciences. That era was dominated by the likes of A.S. Neill and John Holt in education, and Abe Maslow and Carl Rogers in humanistic psychology. So, I learned early that to defend myself I had to know the critics’ work well and be able to respond to it. Besides, I was interested in other points of view and always enjoyed the intellectual play of competing systems.

The final part of this lesson was to get out of your own paradigmatic space, but do so without leaving your paradigm behind. I knew by the late 1970s that my interests in teaching research could not be confined by the prevailing research agendas within behavior analysis. Having become accustomed to reading widely outside my own paradigm, I was also learning to recognize good behavioral approaches that were masquerading under other paradigms, most notably, in the late 70s, the emerging cognitive paradigm.

My “Eureka” experience came when I read Walter Doyle’s (1979) chapter in Peterson and Walberg’s book on research on teaching. Doyle starts that chapter by arguing that the reinforcement view of teaching was bankrupt. Now, when I see an argument begin with negative references to a reinforcement view or, even worse, a stimulus-response model, I know that the person making the argument doesn’t know much about what he or she is condemning, so I’m ready for the worst. So, I was ready for the worst from Doyle, but much to my amazement, the following explanation of his ecological model followed a page or two thereafter. “A second feature of an ecological viewpoint is, appropriately, that there is a direct focus on environment–behavior relationships. The model postulates that environments
establish limits on the range of behavioral options and that observed behavior is in large measure a response to the demand characteristics of classroom environments” (Doyle, 1979, p. 189).

Of course, that was a perfectly behavioral description; indeed, nearly every aspect of his emerging ecological model made as much sense from my set of assumptions as it did from his information processing, cognitive explanatory system. So, I used the Doyle model for 20 years and have used it with a mixture of methodologies but always with behavioral explanations.

**Lesson 2: We live in universities, not seminaries.**

I first learned this lesson in the early ’60s as a young faculty member trying to sort out what life as a college teacher was all about, wanting to take part but not wanting to embarrass myself. Many faculty met regularly each morning for coffee and one morning a great argument developed—I honestly can’t recall the issue debated—and I entered into it on a side opposite that of a full professor from whom I had taken two literature classes just a few years previously. We went at it pretty heatedly, but when the coffee break ended, we walked out together and he put his arm around my shoulder, grinned, and said, “That was fun!”

That evening at a church consistory meeting, an issue arose about which there was some dispute. The oldest member of the consistory was a Dutch-American carpenter who usually did not participate in such discussions. At a crucial point, he said, “I believe we should follow what the Heidelberg Catechism says about this issue.” A fellow consistory member asked, “What does it say?” He replied, “I don’t know, but whatever it says is what we should follow.”

What I learned, of course, is that we live in universities, not seminaries. We deal with theory, not theology. A major problem in education for most of our lifetime has been the commanding presence of ideologues for whom a theory about teaching and schooling became a theology. It has been particularly present for the past decade in what has come to be known as the “reading wars.” The fatal flaw of ideologues is that they are too often compelled to condemn opposing views in order to manifest allegiance to their own view—holding a different perspective is viewed as heresy—and those who are heretics have to be burned at the stake, rhetorically at least.

**Lesson 3: All knowledge is provisional — therefore, value inquiry.**

This of course is a direct corollary to Lesson 2. Theological knowledge is viewed as revealed, certainly not provisional. Theoretical and practical knowledge evolves, and not always in a linear fashion. This is a lesson I learned intellectually and personally. I’ll share two examples:

It was clear to me in my early work in radical behaviorism that evolutionary biology, materialist cultural anthropology, and behavior analysis were coming together as disciplines that shared similar assumptions. I began in the ’70s to read about evolutionary biology, and one of the things I learned was that at the turn of the century in American universities, Darwin’s theory of evolution had become fully discredited. It was in eclipse, and not primarily from religious opposition, but rather within the scientific community. What saved and solidified evolutionary theory was not any new evidence within biology but rather a methodological breakthrough in the sister discipline of geology—carbon dating. The criticism that Darwinists had been unable to respond to was the amount of geological time
necessary for evolution to occur. It wasn’t until the methodological breakthrough in geology that evidence emerged to show that earth and life was sufficiently old for the time needed for evolution to have taken place.

On a personal note, when I was playing high school football in 1954, on hot August preseason practice days, we were not allowed to drink water and instead were told to suck lemons, which we did faithfully. A coach doing that today would be liable for malpractice. The coach then and the coach now both act on the current level of knowledge. All knowledge is provisional—one must strive constantly to not yield to the complacency of knowledge, and always place great value on the inquiry necessary to extend the knowledge.

Lesson 4: When the variance within is as large as the variance between, there is unlikely to be a significant difference — therefore, seek commonalities.

This is a lesson I first learned from Art Slater-Hamel in my statistics courses at Indiana. At that time, the first qualifying exam for doctoral students was a 4-hour statistics exam. You had to pass that exam before you could sit for the general exam, so I paid attention to what Dr. Slater-Hamel said. We spent an entire semester on the analysis of variance—and I learned that when the variance within experimental and control groups was sufficiently large, it became difficult to find a significant difference between the groups. Starting from that narrow sense, I eventually learned of the risk of conjuring up what are likely to be insignificant differences and making a big deal out of them.

I never forgot that, and the corollary to it, for me, has been to seek commonalities rather than differences. I’ll give you two examples: In the early to mid-1980s qualitative researchers in sport pedagogy felt marginalized, discriminated against in terms of journal space and conference presentation opportunities. What ensued was a brief internecine warfare within sport pedagogy wherein some inclined to the qualitative approach made their case by contrasting their approach with what they perceived to be a positivist approach.

Since I knew a bit about some qualitative traditions, ethnography in particular, I was supportive of those who wanted to use qualitative methods. I felt it necessary, however, to speak against the need to raise qualitative flags over the rhetorically slain body of positivism. Sadly, those debates tended to brand me as an anti-qualitative person, which was never true. I have always been particularly fond of ethnographic methods as they have been used in anthropology because they share a common methodological strategy with behavior analysis—that of long-term, contextualized observations. If you look in the Quest theme issue on “Learning to Play” that I put together in 1976, you will see that the most prominent article was Greg and Gladys Stone’s ethnography of child rearing among the Sanema, a South American tribe.

I knew there were great variations in behavioral research traditions and suspected the same was true with the qualitative fields. A 1987 article in the Review of Educational Research (Jacob, 1987) showed that the differences within qualitative research traditions—using the term in the Kuhnian sense—were substantial. Holistic ethnography, cognitive anthropology, symbolic interactionism, ethnography of communication, and ecological psychology represented traditions with somewhat differing assumptions. Indeed, ecological psychology was closer, in assumptions and methods, to behavior analysis than it was to holistic ethnography. Seek the commonalities.
The second example is more current. I earlier mentioned the Reading Wars—phonics versus whole language. I am more involved with them than I care to be. The College of Education at The Ohio State University houses the North American Reading Recovery Program. Reading Recovery, Inc., is trademarked. It is a subsidiary corporation of The Ohio State University, as is its companion organization, The Reading Recovery Council of North America. We just held the annual RR conference in Columbus in the winter quarter; more than 10,000 were in attendance. RR and RRCNA have combined staffs of over 50 professionals. As Dean of the College of Education, I served as the titular Chairman of the Board of Reading Recovery.

The Columbus Public Schools have decided that each elementary school in the district should have a coherent reading program. Schools can choose among (a) the Early Literacy Collaborative program (which grew from RR), (b) Bob Slavin’s Success for All, and (c) Direct Instruction (DISTAR). Both Success for All and DISTAR use scripted lessons, with highly explicit, data-based instructional approaches. The literacy faculty in my college is committed to literacy-based reading programs and has leaned toward the whole language perspective. DISTAR in particular incurs their wrath, and there is much talk about dumbing-down teachers and fabricating data and the like. For a few of the faculty the argument has become ideological. Their level of knowledge about the other approaches and the research base supporting them is generally weak.

Seek the commonalities. It takes a full year of postdoctoral work to qualify as an RR trainer—and these are faculty who enter with literacy PhDs! The training to be a teacher leader is extensive. I’ve seen the skills it takes to do DISTAR well, and believe me, they are extensive. All three of the approaches Columbus is using require skills that go well beyond those that classroom teachers have; this is one of the reasons that all three work better than more typical approaches.

Here are the four tenets of RR instruction: Different lessons are prepared for different student profiles. Teaching is more explicit than typical. Lessons are daily, individually paced, and individually designed. A complete record of performance is kept and used to make decisions. The basic tenets of DISTAR differ somewhat because the teaching is done in groups with choral responding followed by individual responding, but the teaching is highly explicit and data-driven. To be sure, DISTAR and RR are different from one another. The question is, are they more alike in their difference from normal classroom reading instruction? I think they are.

What this has also led me to understand is that our tendencies to compare and contrast approaches as if they were on a linear continuum is misleading and counterproductive. The circle is a better visual method of comparing and contrasting different traditions. In politics, for example, when you get to the very far right (libertarian) and the very far left (anarchist), you are in fact at two positions typically thought to be far apart—as they would seem if you showed them at either end of a linear continuum—but indeed, share many beliefs and political positions—as they would appear if the model for comparison was circular rather than linear.

**Lesson 5: Be careful what you say — someone smart may be listening.**

I’ll share only two of what are probably many experiences that have taught me this. In a 1982 *JTPE* article, I made the case for an interventionist approach, arguing that one learns more about “things” when one tries to change them than one can learn by simply observing them. In that article, I also argued the point,
well established by then in the field of behavior analysis, that when effects were weak, one should first of all try to strengthen the independent variable; that is, use a stronger treatment. In so doing, I got a bit out on the edge and said the following about the then increasingly popular notion of aptitude-treatment interactions: “Does anybody really believe that the investigation of ATIs will somehow render less important what we already know about main effects?” At that time Dave Griffey and Lynn Housner were pioneering the ATI research in our field. Later in 1982 at the Big Ten pedagogy conference at Purdue, David presented a good paper on ATIs and at a point in the paper quoted my assertion in *JTPE* and looked out over what was a quite large audience, directly at me, and challenged the assertion—quite well and convincingly. David has never been shy about his points of view—and I liked that he did that.

More recently, in Mary O’Sullivan’s (1996) chapter on teacher education in Steven Silverman and Cathy Ennis’ book, there is a section on content knowledge. In it Mary references a 1989 paper of mine in which I said that our teachers are more skillful than ever but many are so unprepared in content that they would be described as “ignorant” if it were a cognitive field of knowledge, which I believe to be true. In the next section of her paper, which focuses on pedagogical knowledge, she uses a 1990 quote from an *Academy Papers* article in which I said, “all failures in teaching derive from a lack of pedagogical skill rather than inadequate subject matter knowledge,” which is decidedly not true. She kindly lets me off the hook by saying I have been “ambivalent” about the relative importance of content and pedagogical knowledge. She could have said a lot worse, and rightfully so. These are the experiences that teach one to be more careful in his or her scholarship—and I have always been grateful to those who have provided those criticisms, especially when they have done so without being mean-spirited about it.

Lesson 6: Effective instruction is defined by sustained, deliberate practice.

After 40 years of teaching, coaching, and investigating, this is what I think I’ve learned about curriculum, instruction, and learning. Good teaching exists when students are sustained in their engagement in deliberate practice that leads to important outcomes. If you want to talk to me about curricular approaches or instructional models, fine, but I will want to go immediately to the degree to which students are sustained in deliberate practice. Curiously, I knew this intellectually before I knew it more personally. I had been an athlete and coach for most of my young life. I always liked practice, but it wasn’t until I began to study instruction seriously that I began to see the crucial importance of *deliberate* practice.

I came to know it personally in 1977 when I went to Georgia as a visiting professor and got to know a then young assistant professor named George Graham. Early in that term, George asked me to join his regular running group for the noon-time run. I put on my Converse All Stars for an easy 4-mile run around campus and about died! I could play basketball for hours on end at that time, but couldn’t run a mile under 7 minutes and couldn’t run even 3 miles at an 8-minute pace. Seven years later, at age 46, I ran a marathon in under 7 minutes a mile! In between, I had built up to running 60 miles a week. Those experiences taught me the direct relationship between certain kinds of efforts and certain kinds of outcomes—and taught me a huge lesson in the importance of sustained, deliberate effort.

Seek the commonalities. This is not a difference between constructivist and...
instructivist approaches—the current polarities in the instructional wars—or a difference between behavioral and cognitive approaches, a slightly different academic war. Indeed, behavioral and cognitive scientists agree on the need for deliberate practice. The prominent cognitive psychologist Herbert Simon and his colleagues (Anderson, Reder, & Simon, 1997) have reacted against education ideologies that denounce deliberate practice—which poke fun or worse at memorization and warn that systematic instruction will turn children into automatons. They argue that many years of research have shown that achieving competence requires extensive practice (Ericcson, Krampe, & Tesche-Romer, 1993). They further argue that while repetitive drills may be counterproductive, the task for teachers is to find interesting tasks that sustain students through the necessary practice to achieve meaningful outcomes.

In a recent Daedalus article, Lauren Resnick and Megan Williams Hall (1998) describe the tenets of what they call knowledge-based constructivism. While supporting the fundamental constructivist position that learners do indeed construct their understanding of the world around them through processes that are interpretive and inferential, Resnick and Hall argue that cognitive science has shown conclusively that having a strong base of accurate knowledge is essential at every point of learning. They argue that while facts alone do not constitute knowledge and thinking power, thinking processes cannot proceed without something to think about! They conclude by suggesting that knowledge-based constructivism can moderate the polarity between drill pedagogies and child-centered pedagogies. Seek the commonalities.

A corollary to this is that while we know a lot about the conditions of deliberate practice, we know very little about how to sustain students in that practice for the time it takes to achieve real competence within the context of physical education. I also think we know very little about how to sustain teachers in their pursuit of expertise in what they do.

**Lesson 7: Don’t distance yourself from the professionals you serve.**

These next two lessons are about my professional life. I suspect the genesis of them was my growing awareness of the differences between academic life in the arts and sciences and life in professional colleges. Another factor, no doubt, was that in the late 1970s I was asked by Kevin Ryan, of moral education fame, who was then our Associate Dean for Programs, to head the teacher education redesign movement in the College of Education, thus becoming immersed in reading about, thinking about, and planning for teacher education. At that time, my yearly assignment involved advising 10–12 full-time doctoral students and teaching almost exclusively at the graduate level. It was a heady time for me—great students… a real sense of community… exciting research projects—I will always remember that time fondly. I spent a lot of time in schools, but mostly doing observations as part of research projects.

What I wasn’t doing was any teacher education. In the spring quarter of 1981, I met with my school director and program coordinator and asked to have my teaching load changed so that each academic year I would do one content course in the gymnasium, a methods course, and supervise in student teaching, in addition to my graduate classes and advising. The quid pro quo was that they would have to commit to hiring faculty who could help at the doctoral level. It was one of the best decisions I made. It put me regularly in contact with undergraduates in all the various phases of their professional preparation, and with teachers in the field. This
greatly enriched my scholarship and helped extend my research program. And, eventually, it led to OSU’s attracting the colleagues who so enriched my academic and professional life in the late ’80s and ’90s.

**Lesson 8: If you are going to curse the darkness, light a light.**

As most of you know, I’ve never been an apologist for physical education or for how we do teacher preparation. I have a long record of being a critic within sport pedagogy, even though I have also tried to argue our cause in venues such as the AAKPE, which have historically been hostile to us. My research program throughout the ’70s had focused mostly on supervision and behavior change in student teaching. In the late ’70s and early ’80s we developed the Academic Learning Time model, which led to a great deal of descriptive research. All of those studies required long-term observation in schools.

What I began to understand was that in many cases, even when teachers were managing and teaching well, by the standards we understood at that time, the lessons were less than exciting and the students were not terribly enthused. I began to see that good technical instruction was insufficient if it was done in mundane and ordinary curriculum units. My doctoral dissertation had been a curriculum theory, but in the ’70s I had left that entirely to focus on management and teaching skills. So, it wasn’t out of character that I returned to curriculum, but without leaving behind what I had learned about management and teaching skills. It became clear to me that I could not maintain the “critic” role I had begun to carve out for myself without trying to build something that was positive and sustainable. This was the impetus that led in the early ’80s to what has become a 20-year project to develop the Sport Education model.

**Lesson 9: Keep your social consciousness in perspective — don’t become self-righteous.**

Some of you may have read Bob Donmoyer’s (1997) “the vision thing” series in *Educational Researcher* over the past several years. A lot of that dialogue was about being professional and political—about the social consciousness of researchers. One delightful argument was raised around the notion of researchers being able to help policy-makers reach decisions about what to do. Some ER contributors thought we had to help craft policy, while others thought that researchers couldn’t and shouldn’t do that.

The story that captured my attention was the senator who asked for evidence on which to base an education policy initiative. The researcher gave him a typical researcher response about how equivocal the data were; that is, on one hand you could see the data supporting this view, but on the other hand it doesn’t support that view—leading the senator to comment that what he sought was a “one-armed researcher” who wouldn’t be able to say to him, when asked for a policy recommendation, “on the other hand” (Resnick, 1997). I have come to understand that this is what most distinguishes arts and sciences faculty from professional college faculty. It’s not that arts and sciences folks aren’t socially conscious—think about Noam Chomsky. Rather it is that their social consciousness and scholarship tend to be bifurcated, whereas in professional colleges, scholarship can and should be socially conscious.

Sport pedagogy has been wonderfully conscious about social issues over the past decade. I think we all should be proud that Jan Harris (1993), review-
ing the kinesiological disciplines for their social conscience in her Amy Morris Homans lecture several years ago, showed that sport pedagogy was the sole area where there had been an active discourse on social issues. I have tried in my own way to participate in that discourse. Those of you who have read my papers over the past several years know that I have used the “social gradient” evidence from health epidemiology to argue for a more inclusive and equitable physical activity infrastructure for children and youth. There are many of you who also have social agendas, who have visions for schools and the education of children and youth that are tied to your sense of what a just society can and should be.

Let me relate three lessons I think I have learned, sometimes the hard way, about keeping my social conscience in perspective: First, when making an essentially political argument about social justice and the nature of a “good” society, it is helpful to have an evidentiary base to support your arguments. Now, you might not always realize an enormous benefit from having evidence available to support your position, but the cost of not having evidence to support your views can be deadly (Ladwig, 1998). The work of scholars in the professions can and even should be political (of course, our critical colleagues argue that it is political), but that does not relieve us from the obligation that it be scholarship supported by evidence.

Second, I have learned that political and social allegiances can sometimes push you into a corner methodologically—can force you toward an orthodoxy that renders some methodological approaches politically acceptable and others politically unacceptable. I learned this lesson the hard way when the critical–technocrat wars were being waged, with the so-called technocrats associated with positivist methodologies and the so-called critical theorists associated with qualitative methodologies. If you do research with a natural science methodology, you are a positivist, and if you are a positivist, you are a technocrat, and so went the litany. So, in some instances, I ended up in rhetorical skirmishes with colleagues whose political goals were probably quite close to my own and whose vision of a just society was more similar to than different from mine. The lesson here is that when the rhetoric heats up, seeking commonalities becomes more difficult and orthodoxy becomes more likely.

The third lesson is the most personal and has been, for me, the most humbling. In the late 1970s I read an interesting article titled “The Philosopher of Death Confronts His Own Death”—based on an interview with Ernest Becker, a Berkeley philosopher and ’60s activist who was dying from cancer. I immediately bought and read his seminal work titled *The Denial of Death* (Becker, 1973), a book that is, in the first instance, an analysis of heroism as a psychological and sociological force in human affairs, and, in the second instance, an Adlerian analysis of faith and death. I had long been interested in the concept of heroism. My first published scholarly paper, in the *Canadian Journal of Sport History*, was an analysis of the influence of the heroic ethic in Greek culture (Siedentop, 1972).

Becker introduced me to the concept of what he called a “safe heroism.” He argued that for life to be meaningful, we all have to seek some heroic project so as to be able to see ourselves in that light, and that in many cases persons develop heroic projects that are without much real risk; that is, they are “safe” heroic projects. In a marvelous concluding sentence to a main section of that book, he said: “The debt to life has to be paid somehow; one has to be a hero in the best and only way that he can; in our impoverished culture even – as Harrington so truly put it
– if only for his skill at the pinball machine” (Becker, 1973, p. 217).

So, I came to understand a long time ago that I practice a safe heroism. I write about the social gradient in health and leisure. I advocate a more inclusive, equitable physical education and sport. I argue that this cannot be achieved without reducing the distances among socioeconomic classes. I do it consistently, at every opportunity that comes my way. I vote consistently for the left candidates, even though they are not very much to the left. I wear my McGovern pin on every presidential election, just to remember that there once was a good candidate. I do it, however, from the safe confines of my professorial life. I do it with a large salary that is supported by public taxes, paid mostly by adults who earn less than I do. Like most of you, I have organized my professional life partially to secure and increase that salary. I will have lived my professional life and made these arguments during a time when schools and the society they serve have become increasingly less equitable. I worry all the time that this has become my safe heroism.

I would be less than candid if I also did not say to you that I am troubled by what I sense as a competition in sport pedagogy to see who has the stronger social conscience, and the degree to which social arguments have taken on a self-righteous tone. I would also be less than candid if I did not say that I am also troubled by the marginalization of our colleagues in sport pedagogy who hold what I would call conservative views on social issues. There are of course perfectly legitimate conservative, intellectual positions on issues such as welfare, affirmative action, and the distribution of wealth. I keep hoping that when I argue for a more equitable distribution of wealth, a colleague will step forward and say “fair enough, but let’s not ignore the conditions under which wealth is created.” One would have to look long and hard in our own conference presentation and in our journals to see such arguments made. Do not think that they are not out there. They are. The truth is, we have collectively silenced them.

Lesson 10: Don’t be afraid — it’s better to be in the battle.

No stories here because I am not at all sure where or how I learned this! The blessing in my life has been that in intellectual and academic discourse I was never afraid. I learned to be careful and I learned when to shut up—but that is different from being afraid to participate, or simply not wanting to participate.

As I look back at the 80 or so doctoral graduates I have advised, I hope that I have in some measure helped them to want to be in the game and to not be afraid to do so. Many have certainly made their own marks. You know Rink, Dodds, McKenzie, Van der Mars, Metzler, Ward, Eldar, Tinning, Darst, Tousignant, O’Sullivan, and others. You probably don’t know Carol Mertler, the first women’s AD at Purdue; Deborah Birdwell Moore, who someday I expect may be the first female commissioner of the Ohio High School Athletic Association; Ahmos Rolider, who is a leading world expert on aversive techniques to assist in the rehabilitation of brain-injured patients; or Terry Liskeyvych, who literally built the infrastructure for the United States Volleyball Association’s elite women’s program in his 10 years as our national coach—all of whom operated successfully in arenas that were often hostile to their aims. They were not afraid. Theypersevered. Those are qualities I greatly admire.

My sincere thanks to all of you for this signal honor. It is deeply felt, coming as it does from the peer group that is most important to me.
References


