I'd Rather Teach Peace

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Don't Ask Questions, Question the Answers

To find the way to make peace with ourselves and to offer it to others, both spiritually and politically, is the most important kind of learning. To accept our abilities and limitations, and the differences in others—this is the contentment that gives life its highest value. It frees us to grow without restraint and to settle without pressure.

—Wendy Schwartz

The job of the peacemaker is to stop war, to purify the world, to get it saved from poverty and riches, to heal the sick, to comfort the sad, to wake up those who have not yet found God, to create joy and beauty wherever you go.

—Muriel Lester

Georgetown Law

Martin Buber said that "all real living is meeting." Opening classes are for that. Sixteen second- and third-year students have signed on. Some years the number has been twenty. Others twelve. In the catalogue the course title—"Law, Conscience, and Nonviolence"—is something less than a grabber for those hot to make partner in ten years. Their yen is for boardroom law, fixer law, insider law, loophole law. After a decade or so of seventy- and eighty-hour work weeks,

wearied and torn, they may ask themselves, what for? Between the ages of thirty and forty-five, lawyers as a profession have the highest rate of career shifts.

When my law students go out every fall to interview for jobs at firms for the following summer, they tell me that managing partners almost always look at the courses on the transcript, and ask: "What's this one all about, this 'Law, Conscience, and Nonviolence?' That's actually a course?" A brow is furrowed: hire summer associates with a conscience? The students squirm. Damn. All was going well until then. They think fast. They say their sweetheart was in the class, and that was the only time to see each other—amid eight hours a day of studying torts, taxes, evidence, and corporate law. "Yes, yes," says the MP. Understandable. Resourceful, too.

I use the first class to relax everyone. Socialize a bit. Lower law-school intensity a half notch. Introduce ourselves, share a few stories, have a laugh or two. It's OK to be human in law school.

Going around the room, I ask students about their educational backgrounds. The first ones say, "Yale, Chapel Hill, Stanford."

"No, no," I say. "Where did you go to elementary school?" The question throws them. Elementary school? They have to think, remembering.

I want them to think and remember. We spend eight years of our lives in kindergarten, first grade, second grade, and on up during the most formative time of our lives when more than 80 percent of our character is formed, and rarely are we asked about it. I ask, "Who was your favorite grade school teacher? Have you any friends from those days? Did you think about being a lawyer in third grade?" Soon, the class is enjoying this but all the time wondering what oddity of a professor this is to be dwelling on elementary school. Maybe he's leading up to a BIG POINT, as shifty law profs like to do!

No point, large or small. Just a bias. I explain. I believe that elementary school teachers do the heavy lifting of American education. Yet few rewards go their way. The plums are reserved for college and university professors. They are well

paid. They are asked by newspaper editors to review the latest books in their field, often written by other professors. They are asked to write op-eds on school reform. They are given teaching assistants to handle the lowly chores of grading papers. They enjoy paid sabbaticals.

Little of the professorial life compares with the daily arduousness of what most elementary school teachers endure. The best have courage and inner resilience the rest of us can only imagine. Under the rubric of "classroom teaching," they are expected to discipline, entertain, correct, nurse, motivate, grade, call parents, fill out attendance sheets, do lunch room duty, tell kids not to run in the hall, and tell them again the next day, and the next, find lost raincoats and boots, put chairs back in place, order books, hustle for book shelves, and then go home to turn on the evening news to behold still another politician blasting the schools for failing.

I admire elementary school teachers immensely. I urge everyone in the class to take a few minutes in the coming week to write a letter to a former grade school teacher who is remembered with affection and say thanks.

By now everyone is relaxed and then some. The class wit has been identified. The class orator, too, along with the quiet ones who by the end of the course will be doing more talking than they dreamed.

Georgetown Law is the country's largest law school, with more than fifteen hundred students and eight thousand applicants a year. My tiny class—hundreds sign up every semester for corporate law courses two floors below—attracts students who are shopping around for a philosophy of the law, not merely a career in it. I try to ground them in Gandhi, who believed in reconciliation law, not adversarial law. During his early years as a lawyer in South Africa, he wrote:

> *My joy was boundless. I had learnt the true practice of law. I had learnt to find out the better side of human nature and to enter men's hearts. I realized that the true function of a lawyer was to unite parties riven asunder. The lesson was indelibly burnt into me that a large*

> *part of my time during the twenty years of my practice as a lawyer was occupied in bringing about private compromises of hundreds of cases. I lost nothing thereby—not even money, certainly not my soul.*

We read this aloud and discuss it. Many in the class had no idea that Gandhi was a lawyer, and some were totally unfamiliar with him in any way. Maybe it's time for the companies that charge people up to one thousand dollars for LSAT review courses to throw in a few sample questions on Gandhi's legal theory.

For some educational theory I offer the notion of the Four A's, the stages of intellectual development through which all us move, regardless of the subject.

- *Awareness*, as when we first learn that 2+2=4, or when we first hear Gandhi's line that the "goal of reconciliation is not to bring adversaries to their knees but to their senses."
- *Acceptance*. We accept that 2+2=4, or that Gandhi was right.
- *Absorption*. An idea is taken into our lives, we need it to get by or to go on, it becomes part of us.
- *Action*. Now the game begins.

I remember standing amid fifteen thousand fellow runners at the noon start of the Boston Marathon one year, on that thin downhill country lane sloping out of Hopkinton. All morning we had been in the local school gym staying warm and gabbing to each other about other races in other times. When the starter's whistle went off, a person next to me—he looked to be over seventy and wore shorts with a dozen patches from past Bostons that he'd finished—called out, "Action time. Cut the baloney and run."

I have no clue at which A any member of the class is in. Probably a mix. Some have only a slight awareness of nonviolence, and a few may be well into the action stage. By the end of the course, we'll know more.

After mentioning a few procedural matters—the school's requirement of a six-thousand-word paper for the course, the granting of sixty-day extensions—I make a request. No one is allowed to ask questions in this class. Questions are absolutely forbidden. Instead, do something bolder, braver, and riskier: question the answers. What answers? The ones given by anyone—political leaders, the clergy, teachers, family members, friends—who says the answer to violence is more violence. To question that answer is to risk scorn, to be labeled naive. It also means questioning the nature of laws, because, to start with the United States, violence has been legalized. It is constitutional to hire a military and pay its members to solve conflicts by obeying orders to kill or threaten to kill people. Executions on death row are sanctioned both by federal and state courts. It is legal to require citizens to pay taxes that fund these and other forms of official death-dealing with no regard that a pacifist could, in conscience, want to be taxed only for nonviolent programs.

Class time is only two hours. It's not much. We could spend a full semester on Gandhi's life and thoughts alone, beginning with his statement to the sentencing judge in the great trial of 1922. For the following week I ask everyone to read the chapter on Dorothy Day, the co-founder of the *Catholic Worker* and, like Gandhi, a lawbreaker and jailbird. Before leaving, I tell the class that I'd be grateful if they would work on two assignments: (1) Don't let a day go by without telling someone you love them; and (2) write a letter to someone to whom you owe a favor. Maybe that elementary school teacher.

Oak Hill Youth Center, Laurel, Maryland

It's called a youth center, but from the two rows of razor wire atop twenty-foot chain-link fences that go for about a mile around seventy acres of rural property, it's clear it is a prison. The inmates are nearly all black teenagers sent here by District of Columbia Superior Court judges. The name Oak Hill has become synonymous with mismanagement, failed hopes, and few positive results. One administration

after another has come in with hopes of reform and then left with conditions worse. In the mid-1990s Oak Hill was placed in receivership by the Superior Court, which meant administrative decisions would have to be reviewed by a judge. The education program was turned over to a pair of professors from the University of Maryland's school of education. I heard about it and in the summer of 1998 offered to come out—a sixty-mile round trip and over fifty traffic lights, most uncoordinated—to teach nonviolent conflict resolution one afternoon a week.

It isn't much, but at least it keeps me in touch with people whose lives I need to know about, prisoners. Most of the boys in my class were born unwanted, raised unloved, have lived in kill-or-be-killed neighborhoods, and have few memories of secure and happy moments in their lives. They have reading problems, impulse control problems, rage problems.

I have no illusions that I can teach them much about nonviolence. I keep reminding myself: go out to Oak Hill and just be kind to those kids, and you'll be doing plenty. Of course I don't walk in and tell the eight or nine kids with whom I sit together in a circle, "Here I am again, Mr. Kindness. Soak it up, children, and do evil no more." Instead, it's just going back week after week. I bring an essay to read—something by Martin Luther King, Jr., on forgiveness, or a few lines from Gandhi, perhaps a poem by Gwendolyn Brooks, an essay by Claude McKay—and get the kids to talk about it. On that level it is teaching humanities to people who have been treated inhumanely and, often enough, have treated others inhumanely.

In the first class I taught, in the summer of 1998, there were twenty-three boys in the room, all of them ordered to be there. Most were in foul moods, having been herded out of the cellblocks across the yard to the school, their card games and TV shows interrupted. I hadn't uttered more than a few syllables when a boy in the back row, both arms well tattooed and thick as a python's body, called out, "How's this course be helping me to get out of here?" "I can't say exactly," I answered, "but it could help to keep you from coming back."

Seconds later a boy in the far corner—wiry, small-framed, and intense—had a question: "Hey, Mister, are you a racist?" I tried to remember the last time I'd been asked that. While thinking, and not recalling, I heard a voice in the other back corner call out, "Why you taking so long to answer?" I said that was the first time I'd ever had that question. But no, I wasn't a racist.

I have to say, I did enjoy this give-and-take. Straight to the point. Frank. And relevant.

This fall I have a smaller group of seven. Twenty-three was unwieldy, even with a guard in the room. The boys are from 9B, a protective custody unit. I never ask anyone what he's in for. On the outside we don't meet someone and ask what kind of messes they've been in. Why on the inside? The youngest member of the class is eleven. He rarely sits still. He doesn't speak, he blurts. He can't look at a page for more than five seconds. He makes eye contact with someone and shouts out, "Why you looking at me, dumb nigger?"

Do I ask a guard to take him away? Or try to engage him so he'll gain a bit by being in the group? I've tried both, with few signs either way that he's the better for it.

On a trip to Knoxville to give a talk to a group of social workers, a teacher at a Tennessee youth prison told me that she, too, had an eleven-year-old black boy in her literacy class: "He's a sullen kid most of the time, but the other day he was cheery and talkative. I asked him why he was feeling so good. He told me that he just heard that his daddy had gotten out of prison, 'and that's why I'm happy.' Then he looks up at me and says, 'Weren't you happy, too, when your daddy got out of prison?' It's assumed—everyone's father goes to prison."

At Oak Hill it's much the same. Whenever the topic of fathers comes up, most will say that he's in or has been in prison. Few know where their fathers are now.

It isn't much better with female inmates and their mothers. Last year I taught in the girls' section of the prison. Most were raised by grandmothers.

One afternoon, a fifteen-year-old came running into the group. "I just had a call from my lawyer," she announced

joyously. "He got the judge to release me in two weeks." I said congratulations, and asked what's the first thing she would be doing on going home.

"Gonna get drunk, " she said.

"Why that?" I asked.

"I'm an alcoholic. That's what alcoholics do. We get drunk."

"When did you start drinking?"

She thought a moment and said, "I guess when I was about eight . . . "

Astonished, I interrupted and said, "When you were eight years old?"

"Oh, no, when I was eight months old."

She told the story. Her mother, fourteen years old, overwhelmed by the demands of infant care, didn't know how to get her baby to go to sleep at night. But she had a girlfriend, an "experienced" mother at sixteen who did know: "Give the baby a bottle of apple juice and spike it with gin, and the baby will go off to sleep real quick."

She did, and the baby became an alcoholic in the crib.

The Washington Center

Thirty-two students, all of them with semester-long internships at federal agencies, public-interest groups, or congressional offices, show up at 5 P.M. for a three-hour weekly class. Their home colleges range from big-name to no-name schools: the Ivies, Little Ivies, and Poison Ivies. It makes no difference to me. On the subject of nonviolence, all are in the same state of unawareness. None has ever taken a peace-studies course.

I try to save the students some money by ordering the two course texts myself at a discounted price and carting them in on a dolly. Bookstore markup is avoided. After distributing *Solutions to Violence* and *All of One Peace: Essays in Nonviolence*, a few students open their checkbooks and ask, "How much?"

I reply, "You decide."

Jaws drop, eyebrows rise, eyes widen. There is disbelief. A minor hubbub erupts, threatening to turn major. It goes on

for nearly a minute. After the confusion runs its course, and everyone stops talking to his or her neighbor, a student—from Vanderbilt—raises her hand and asks, "What if we don't know how much to pay?"

I don't offer much help. "You decide."

More talk, more confusion. Another of the perplexed—from Stonehill College—asks: "But what if I give you twenty dollars for the two books and someone else gives you forty?"

"That's their choice. They decided. Now you decide."

Another, from Texas Christian University: "What if we pay you nothing?"

"You decide."

One more, from Florida State: "You're the professor. It's your job to determine the price."

"You decide."

Clearly, none in the class had ever taken a course that granted this much pocketbook power. These, and all students, have been conditioned to pay whatever someone orders them to, herded like sheep around the academic marketplace with never a bleat of protest. Book sales to college students is a racket: profiteering off a captive market, with little accountability to buyers. The odds favor the colleges; they are full-time sellers with power over part-time buyers.

I let the class go at 7:45, to leave fifteen minutes for individual loose ends to be tied. Some students come up with checks. They range from twenty-three dollars to forty-five dollars. One hands me a note saying he wants to look through the books more thoroughly and will bring some money next week. Some say they'll pay at the end of the course.

I congratulate them all. They're deciding.

Stone Ridge Sacred Heart School for Girls, Bethesda, Maryland

At first it doesn't appear as if anything extraordinary is going on. Eighteen high school seniors are in the classroom, part of a consortium program involving five private schools in lower Montgomery County, one of the nation's wealthiest.

The schools are Stone Ridge, Holton-Arms, Holy Child, Landon, and St. Andrews.

A half-dozen electives are offered every year in the consortium, ranging from Mandarin to AP calculus. After speaking at a student assembly in 1998, I was invited by the headmaster at Landon, a boys' school, to teach my course on nonviolence. Last year the site was Landon. This year Stone Ridge, a Catholic girls' school run by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

I am in awe of the sixteen girls and two boys who signed up: they come in at 7:10 A.M., an hour before school opens. A few live in the Stone Ridge neighborhood across the street from the National Institutes of Health, but most need to be up by 6 A.M. to have time for the drive to school. Seeing them walk into class, I wonder, in deep admiration, about the large reserves of self-discipline they must be drawing on. Then, too, what motivates that self-discipline?

Plenty of high schools, public and private, have their small bands of go-getters, but these are mostly the extracurricular whizzes who belong to four clubs, play two varsity sports, and effortlessly rack up hundreds of community service hours—all of it *after* school.

To be an early riser at age seventeen or eighteen—only a few do it. To the question—Why is this group here at this hour?—my hunch is desire.

Some confirmation comes when I ask everyone to write answers to a list of questions I have—some benign probings that let me learn something about each student. One of the questions is, Why are you taking the course and what do want to get out of it?

These are among the written replies that come back the next morning:

I have always admired Gandhi, since the seventh grade. I believe that nonviolence is the most effective way to get what I want: a just world. I want to learn about the history of nonviolent action. There is a whole side of history/social studies which I have not been

exposed to. This class will be my vehicle to take me out to the real world and how to confront injustice. I will hopefully take what I learn and bring it to my activist groups and we can be more productive. Most of all, I want to be inspired.

I'm tired of learning about wars and violent revolutions and never learning the peaceful alternatives.

All my life I have been taught that war is passion, that people who flee from the draft are cowards, that it is noble to fight for your country. I am interested to know the arguments from the other side.

I am interested in contributing in some way to making a more peaceful society. I'm hoping to gain the skills and knowledge to do so. Also, I hope that we will have many active discussions and debates, which seem to be absent in most high school classes.

I am taking this course because I am ashamed of humanity. We seem to be focused on the sole purpose of killing and destroying all that is great and beautiful, including ourselves. I hope that I can become a better person and make a difference in this world.

On a superficial level, I signed up with the intention to improve my problem-solving skills, to learn to share my opinion more openly, and to improve my writing. On a deeper level, I'm here to gain a greater awareness about the world, to learn how I can help, and to further my own spirituality.

I'm taking this course to broaden my view of the political spectrum. I hope to gain a more open mind toward the political views of others. I tend to be extremely set in my ways, which are mostly conservative, and I hope that by taking this class I will be able to fully comprehend the pacifist viewpoint.

I need to learn more about the world I live in. I want to have to think about my personal views and challenge them.

I am the type of person who believes that there is room for self-improvement every day. For that reason, I don't really have many firm convictions of where I stand on issues. That is not to say that I am apathetic. I am not well educated on the subject of nonviolence, but I love learning new perspectives and views. I am taking this course out of pure interest. And to be honest, I am really sick of regular courses geared toward an AP exam.

I'm blessed to have these children with me for the coming year. To the student sick of fake academic rigor, I say that I'm weary too of that style of education and that my course will steer as far away from it as possible. During the first week of class I level with the kids. I tell them that grading, testing, and homework are all but useless, and that all three are forms of academic violence that will be de-emphasized here.

That might have had them break-dancing in the aisles, or on top of the desks for the more agile ones. But I urge them not be fooled. "This will be the most difficult, the most challenging and possibly the most infuriating course you'll ever take. Because it's desire-based, not fear-based, and the desire must come from within. The desire to push yourself, because it leads to inner growth that can't be measured by

grades, tests, or homework. Only you can measure the honesty and intensity of your desire."

Grading, testing, and homework represent teaching by fear. Scare kids into learning. Score well on tests, goes the meritocratic message, and pathways to success widen. Do poorly, and they narrow. Kowtow to a teacher's demands for test preparation, no matter how rote the drilling, or spend hours writing irrelevant papers, and the slavishness will pay off. So it is claimed. And at the end of the course parents can ask, if they ask at all, not what was learned in the course but "What did you get on the final exam? What's your final grade?"

The illusion of excellence remains. The heavier a kid's book-crammed backpack on leaving school, the more the kid is learning. Fear-based learning works for a while—until the course ends, when test-givers and graders can no longer intimidate and the once-intimidated are paroled.

Schools are peopled by two kinds of teachers: those who want power over their students, and those who seek power with. The power-over set are mind-controllers who preach that academic excellence demands a high price, with payments coming in the form of academic suffering: tough tests, rigid grading standards, and heaps of homework. Teachers who seek power with also believe in excellence, but that it must come from self-demand, not teacher-demand.

I understand the riskiness of the power-with approach to education. Some kids will see my course as the ultimate gut course, a pure blow-off. That's fine. They are likely to be the ones who in conventional tests-grades-homework courses learn how to manipulate the system by obeying orders to perform but doing it with no heart. They have been conditioned to believe that successful performance in school assures successful achievement in life. But Walker Percy's line keeps intruding on this fantasy: You can make all A's and go out and flunk life. In twenty years I have seen enough 4.0s pass through my courses and ten or fifteen years later be living wildly messed-up lives to know the truth of that. And to know, too, that the kids who can make demands on themselves and give full effort to reading and writing about

ideas and issues they care about end up as self-assured and self-giving adults. I teach not to help students become thinking people but to help them become thinking and caring people.

My main challenge at Stone Ridge is to help each girl and boy to relax. Some of them walk in carrying a forty-pound backpack crammed with physics books, math books, English books, history books. Forty pounds of books! All in the name of homework. Most of the girls weigh less than 120 pounds. They're hauling one-third of their body weight!

Then there's the other load of fall semester senior year: the mental one of stressing out over college admissions, of getting into the best college, of unwittingly becoming like the model student in the fable by Carol Rinzler in her book *Your Adolescent: An Owner's Manual:*

> *Little Kimberly asks her parents, "If they tell you in nursery school that you have to work hard so you'll do well in kindergarten, and if they tell you in kindergarten that you have to work hard so you'll do well in high school, and if they tell you to work hard in high school so you'll get into a good college, and assuming that they tell you in college that you have to work hard so you'll get into a good graduate school, what do they tell you in graduate school that you have to work hard for?" Kimberly's parents answer: "To get a good job so you can make enough money to send your children to a good nursery school."*

To help reduce the strain on their backs and their spirits, I make a promise to them: I will never start off a class with the grossest turn-off words ever uttered by a teacher, "Students, we have a lot of ground to cover today." I ask the class to do themselves, and me, a favor: when they hear teachers say that, stand up and tell them to go become the cross-country coach.

University of Maryland

On Monday afternoons from 12:20 to 3:00, in a seminar room in Anne Arundel Hall, eighteen students in the General Honors Program are ready to go. All were invited to be in the honors program based on their high school records. The course offerings range from the exotic—"The McDonaldization of Society," "The Cultural Significance of Astronomy"—to the basic, "The Writing Workshop." In the course description booklet of honors courses, mine is advertised with this note, among others: "Class discussions are expected, and dissent is welcomed. One skeptic enlivens the class more than a dozen passive agreers."

To get the discussion started, and rousingly so, I begin the class with a quiz—this being a gathering of intellectuals for whom acing quizzes is as easy as Tiger Woods making birdies. But it's a quiz with a difference. I open my wallet and pull out a one-hundred-dollar bill, announcing that whoever can identify the six people whose names I'm about to call out wins the one hundred dollars. They look at each other. Is this for real? Is the one-hundred-dollar bill real?

I begin the quiz. Who is Robert E. Lee? All hands shoot up: the general who led the Confederate side in the Civil War. Everyone is one for one. Who is Ulysses S. Grant? All hands rise: The general who led the Union side. Who is Norman Schwarzkopf? The general who won the Persian Gulf War. Everyone is three for three and looking good.

Who is Jeannette Rankin? No hands go up. Who is Dorothy Day? No one stirs. Who is Jody Williams? No one knows.

The class wit—a finance major, it turns out—asks if he is entitled to fifty dollars because he knew the first three.

Sorry, friend. The game is all six or nothing.

I've done this one-hundred-dollar-bill quiz hundreds of times, before students in classrooms, before students in large assemblies, and before large audiences of educators. No one's ever won the one hundred dollars. It's safe money. It's safe, too, that everyone will know the first three but not the last

three. They know the peacebreakers but not the peacemakers. They know the men who want to solve conflicts by killing but not the women who believe in loving.

My honors students didn't need to have it explained. By the end of the course, I told them, you'll know all about Rankin, Day, and Williams. "Hey," calls out the class wit, still at it, "do we get the same quiz then?" Funny boy.

School Without Walls

Sometimes I wonder if this school wasn't named presciently: it may soon be without walls. The three-story building, which seems to be tilting a half-degree a year, goes back to the Grant administration. It's the oldest structure in the neighborhood, on G Street between 21st and 22nd. Five blocks east is the White House, five blocks west the Watergate apartments. Power one direction, money the other, and in between an impoverished public high school serving some two hundred students.

I have nine of them: three sophomores, three juniors, three seniors. Four blacks, five whites, five girls, four boys. Michael Henry, one of the seniors, who went with his Unitarian church group to the peace conference last year at The Hague, is taking the course for the second time. He is voracious about the literature of peace. To get him into class again—the rule from on high is that courses that are passed can't be repeated—we had to strategize a bit. I changed the name of the course from "Alternatives to Violence" to "Solutions to Violence." That was enough to fool the computers, plus the "papercrats." If a student has enthusiasm for a course, that should be enough. Michael, the only D.C. public high school student to be a finalist for a National Merit Scholarship, has it.

For some first-class sport, I announce a game. It's called red car, green car. In an earnest voice—always be earnest the first day of school—I ask the students to leave the room, walk down the hall and stairs and go out the front door. Stand there for ten minutes and count all the cars passing on G Street that are either red or green. Count them as accurately

as possible. After ten minutes, come back and I'll have two questions.

Obediently, the nine march out. I look from the window. There they are, counting reds and greens. Two have notebooks. This is no moment for sloppy counting.

As they walk in, I overhear them comparing numbers. "Five green, seven red?" "No, four green, seven red." "You sure?" "Absolutely, I can count."

They quiet themselves, ready for question number one: "Didn't anyone think that was a bit stupid, standing there counting red cars and green cars?" "Yeah, I did," says one of the bright lights. "Me, too," adds another.

Question number two: "If you thought it was stupid, why'd you do it? Why'd you go in the first place? Why didn't you say 'No, I won't go'?"

As with my honors students at Maryland, the point isn't missed here either. Don't cooperate with abusive power. When it tells you to do something stupid, say no. When it tells you to believe that armies are effective, say no. When it tells you that competition improves character more than cooperation, say no. When it tells you that governments tell the truth, say no. When it tells you that violence brings about peace, say no.

A few years ago I had a perverse moment while giving a lecture at a Midwest university to an audience of graduate students in journalism. They were getting their master's degree, learning how to furrow their brows like Ted Koppel on Nightline. This school even offered a three-credit course on brow furrowing for the future Teds.

It was raining that day, a torrent. I asked the students to go count red cars and green cars—for twenty minutes. In the downpour. They did. They came back soaked and drenched. I told them that even sheep would have refused.

They weren't in much of a mood for my lecture. These are future members of the media. Small wonder that much of U.S. journalism is so suckered or snookered by power. Few dare to resist the seductions, few question the inanities that pass for political wisdom. They stand in the rain counting cars and come back in saying it means something.