

A Journey through the Labyrinth of Doctoral Studies

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Introduction

- Theseus and the Minotaur
- The doctoral program is like a labyrinth



Portfolio Activities

- Blair Mountain Research Project
 - I collaborated with Brandon Nida, a doctoral student of Archaeology at U.C. Berkeley, to write and publish a book chapter. We spent almost 2 years examining existing publications, visiting historical sites, and participating in an archaeological survey of Blair Mountain, WV.

Portfolio Activities

■ Blair Mountain Research Project

- "The Social and Environmental Upheaval of Blair Mountain: A Working Class Struggle for Unionization and Historic Preservation"
- Technically an extracurricular activity
 - Wrong turn in the labyrinth
 - Learned from the experience



Portfolio Activities

- Blair Mountain Research Project
 - Collaboration
 - Completed the project while living in different parts of the country
 - Implications for Distance Learning
 - I'm more open to online teaching

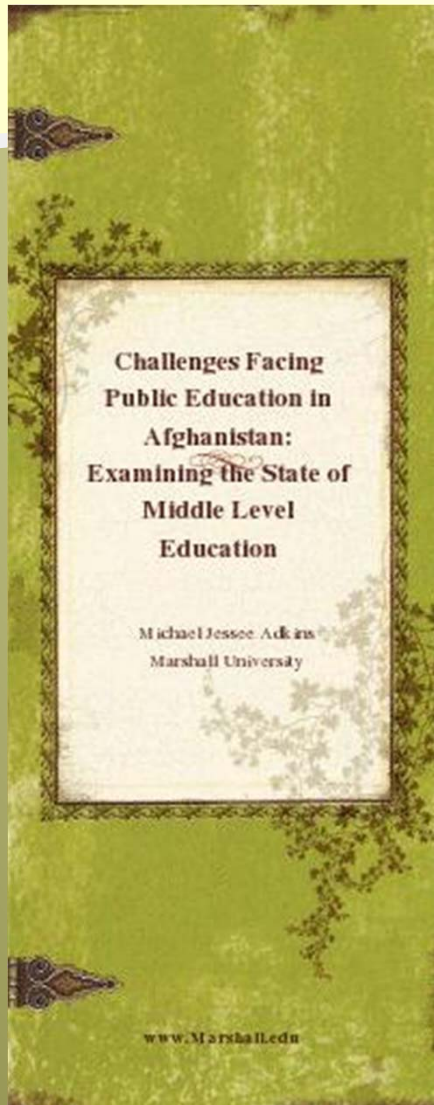


Portfolio Activities

- Middle Level Teacher Symposium
 - I attended the Symposium in Boone, NC with Dr. Calvin Meyer on May 20, 2010. We presented separate research projects and provided mutual support.



Portfolio Activities



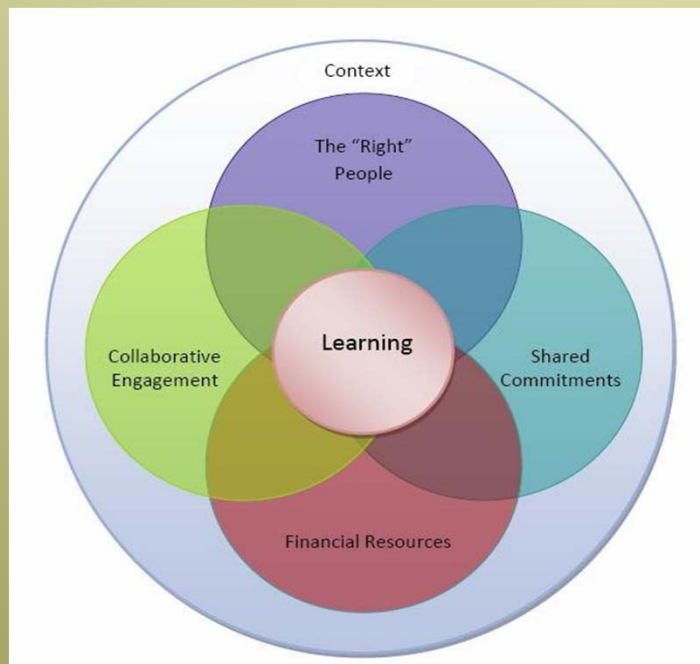
- Middle Level Teacher Symposium
 - “Challenges Facing Public Education in Afghanistan: Examining the State of Middle Level Education”
 - Used a range of multimedia communication options

Portfolio Activities

- Coauthored a manuscript
 - I worked with Dr. Linda Spatig, Paula Flaherty, and Tracy Bradley during the fall semester of 2010. The manuscript was prepared for the West Virginia Partnership to Promote Community Wellbeing and served as an internal document.
 - “Getting It Together: A Learning Model of Community Collaboration”
 - Initially lost within a labyrinth of data

Portfolio Activities

- 23rd Annual Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference
 - “Collaborative Learning and Engagement: A Learning Model of Community Partnerships”



I partnered with Dr. Linda Spatig to present this model at the conference and submit a manuscript to a peer reviewed journal.

Portfolio Activities

- 24th Annual Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference
 - “Public Education in Afghanistan: A Case for Qualitative Research”



I collaborated with Dr. Linda Spatig to give a poster presentation at the conference.

Portfolio Activities

■ Co-Teaching

- I co-taught CI 677 Writing for Publication with Dr. Fran Simone during the Spring semester of 2012.
- The experience reminded me of the participant observer continuum
 - Balanced observation with feedback

Portfolio Activities

■ Paleontology Research Cohort

- Located and extracted fossils
- Extensive collaboration 07/10/12 to 07/23/12
- Insight into grant funding and coordination between universities



Coursework

■ Area of Emphasis

- Communication skills are vital for academic professionals
- Miscommunication can have tragic consequences



Theseus sent the wrong signal to his father because his ship was supposed to use black sails only if Theseus died. This story highlights the need for effective communication.

Coursework

- Area of Emphasis

- Writing

- CI 677 Writing for Publication
 - CI 551 Writing to Learn/Content Area
 - HUMN 604 Expository Writing for Research

- Each course was taught by Dr. Fran Simone. They equipped me with the confidence, competence, and experience to engage in professional writing activities.

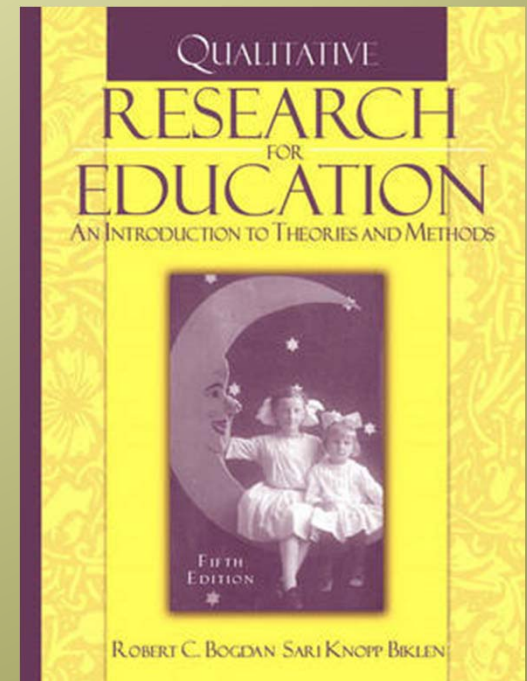
Coursework

■ Challenging Coursework

- EDF 625 Qualitative Research
- EDF 626 Advanced Qualitative Research

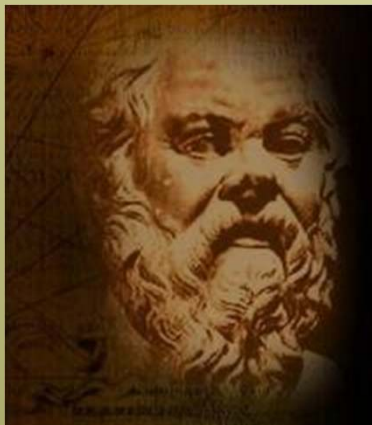
■ Competence Building

- Textual study
- Hands-on practice
- Synthesis of text and practice



Coursework

- Challenging Coursework
 - LS 705 Administration Theory
 - LS 707 Ethical Theory
- Socratic approach
- Development of argument skills



Coursework

- Challenging Coursework
 - LS 725 Higher Education Finance
 - LS 745 Higher Education Law
- Developed awareness of key issues for higher education administrators
- Confidence building
- Systems Theory
 - David Easton
 - Inputs, outputs, and processes

Coursework

■ Student Collaboration

- LS 616 Higher Education Governance
 - Studied the Los Angeles Community College District with Brian Eerenberg
- LS 710 Principles of Leadership
 - Studied mission and vision statements with John Yaun
- LS 760 Politics of Education
 - Studied the politics associated with community colleges splitting from traditional universities in West Virginia with Marc Ellison, Shannon Cottrill, and Kelli Kerbawy

Coursework



■ Student Collaboration

- Like Theseus, I didn't do it alone
 - Princess Ariadne gave him the thread he used to find his way out of the labyrinth
 - My peers provided outstanding support and helped me navigate through the doctoral program
- Transactional Leadership
 - Bernard Bass
 - Mutually beneficial social transactions

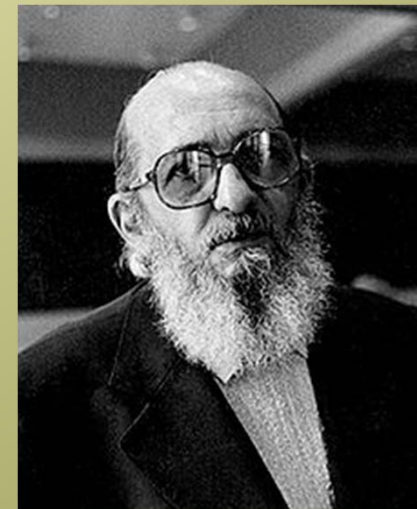
Educational Leadership Philosophy

- Synthesis of portfolio activities and coursework
 - Adaptation was a key aspect of each activity
 - Contingency Theory
 - Fred Fiedler
 - Tailoring of leadership style to fit the situation
 - Adaptation is necessary but not sufficient
 - Moral orientation is needed

Educational Leadership Philosophy

■ Paulo Freire

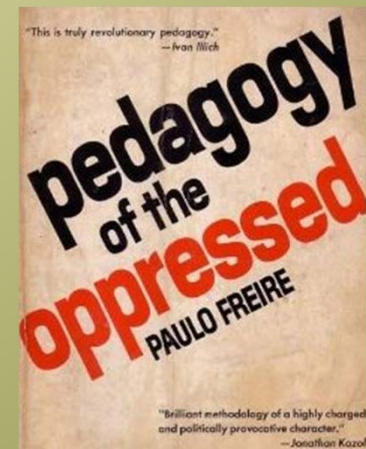
- Excellent moral orientation
- Examined power relationships, pedagogy, and praxis within education.
- Transformational Leadership
 - James Burns
 - Fuse roles of leaders and followers
 - Shared the creation of knowledge



Paulo Freire

Educational Leadership Philosophy

- Coming full circle
 - I once served as a paratrooper and wore a maroon beret with a crest bearing the Latin phrase “De Oppresso Liber”
 - I now promote the educational philosophy expressed in Freire’s book
 - I see education as liberation and educators as liberators



Educational Leadership Philosophy

- Coming full circle



Ancient carvings of labyrinths convey the idea of coming full circle because the mazes had circular shapes with the starting and ending points located in the same place.

Conclusions

- I'm ready to move forward into doctoral candidacy and confront my own Minotaur.



Questions



<https://sites.google.com/site/michaeladkinsportfolio/home>