

# **What Do We Want our Students Not to Learn – How do They Learn It when They Do It Anyway – And What To Do About It? – By Martin Petersen.**

## **Misunderstandings and Misconceptions**

*"That is the single most important message, the one you should remember if you forget everything else...[...]..a competent teacher should try to diagnose student's misunderstandings, in class and from the work they hand in, and then set about trying to change them through structuring the curriculum and assessment correctly. Knowledge about students should be actively used to select and deploy teaching strategies."* (Ramsden 1992 p 102)

The above quote is from Paul Ramsden's classical book "Learning to Teach in Higher Education"

The single most important message – diagnose students misunderstandings - is the sixth key principle for effective teaching in higher education according to Ramsden (ibid). The other five principles, Ramsden (1992 p96 ff) delineates include 'appropriate assessment and feedback' and 'clear goals and intellectual challenge', which – though important – Ramsden by implication must have considered to be less important than the effort to diagnose students misunderstandings.

Considering the abundance of tools, that is available for making assessment and feedback or stating goals, which are considered less important than to diagnose student's misunderstandings, the poverty of the tools available for the most important effort is striking.

To be sure, there have been developments of tools, concepts and different means – notably phenomenography, hidden curriculum and fallacies - to cope systematically with students misunderstandings – and I will delve a little deeper into these later in this paper.

Misunderstandings could be one-off events. Nothing general can be said about them in that case.

The recurring misunderstandings are another matter: Something more stable than unique circumstances must play a crucial part in these cases. I will use the term 'misconception' as a heuristic tool to pinpoint the stable element in the recurring misunderstandings.

I think of the misconceptions as filters that cause students to make unintended interpretations of the messages emitted by college and curriculum. Or in other words the misconceptions are responsible for a systematic bias in students decoding the curriculum message.

## **The Purpose and Plan of This Paper:**

In the beginning of the process of my writing this paper my intention was to propose a full taxonomy of student's misconceptions. Now I have narrowed my ambitions into describing and explaining a particular type of misconceptions: Namely the misconceptions that either serves to blur the distinctions between existing mindsets and the mindsets we try to give the students at college; to discredit the teachings and the ways of college or both. Or to put it in a Piagetian terminology: The misconceptions that makes assimilation of college curriculum into existing schemas more probable as opposed to accommodation of existing schema into the ones intended in curriculum. Or put in yet another but closely related way: The misconceptions that inhibit transformative learning as described by Mezirow (1991).

There is a host of factors that combine to produce misconceptions that subvert the credibility of the college curriculum, inhibit transformative learning or both.

The main content of this paper will be an investigation of such misconceptions.

The investigation will consist of three main questions:

- 1) What is it that we want our students not to learn?
- 2) How do the students manage to get it wrong, when they do so?
- 3) And what can we do to make it right?

The above formulations are in fact a remnant of my original and more encompassing intention of proposing a whole typology instead of a particular type. I will still give answers to the questions but not all the answers as a typology would.

The paper will fall in three parts:

The first one dealing with what we want our students not to learn. The misconceptions that inhibit transformative learning and/or discredits college.

The second mapping an interaction between several factors that combined will explain misconceptions of the above kind. This interaction will not explain other kinds of misconceptions.

And the third will try to make some initial groping after what to do about it. This third part will be short and very preliminary.

### **What Do We Want our Students Not to Learn?**

Among the misconceptions which inhibit transformative learning and/or discredits college I will distinguish between two kinds of misconceptions:

The first kinds are beliefs about the process of learning.

The second kinds are beliefs about the subject-matter of the learning.

Both of these kinds of misconceptions could be subsumed under the category of hidden or unintended curriculum.

The first kind – the one pertaining to the process of learning – could be exemplified by Jane Larson (1995) who did a fieldwork in a science class. Larson observed one bright student, Fatima, who explicitly made a set of rules:

*"Fatima's Rules for Succeeding in Science*

- 1) *Don't read the book*
- 2) *Don't pay attention to any information not reviewed in questions at the end of the sections and/or chapter.*
- 3) *Look for charts, tables and bold words.*
- 4) *Ask the teacher for help as soon as you're stuck.*
- 5) *[..]" (Larson 1995 p 9.)*

To the extent such rules are applied they would inhibit transformative learning, discredit and even ridicule everything the teacher says about the importance and joy of exploring the subject. Though transformative learning may not have been a goal in the science class, Fatima's Rules certainly – according to Larson (1995) – did act to the effect of discrediting and ridiculing the teacher's efforts in the eyes of the students; as the teacher in this case was very keen to have the students relate personally to the subject, state their own questions and so on. And in this way the goal of the teacher was in fact transformative.

The second kind – the one about the subject matter – has been documented by Ejrnæs et al (2005) who established that the concept of *social heritage* - that has been part of the curriculum in Danish tertiary education aiming at social pedagogy and social work - has in effect caused teachers, social workers and the like to stigmatise children of people with social problems, thus further reducing their already reduced chances of social mobility.

When the concept social heritage was adopted in the Danish curriculum, the intention was the exact opposite: Namely to enhance the motivation to counter the forces of inequality by showing how unfair it is that children have social problems just because their parents and grandparents have social problems. This unintended curriculum was according to Ejrnæs (ibid) due to misconceptions of the extent of the social heritage, exaggerating the probability of inheriting social problems and blurring the precision of the concept.

So in a short phrase; social heritage in the reception ended up meaning something along these lines: Do not bother to expect anything from the children of poor people – the effort will turn out to be fruitless anyway.

Fatima's Rules and the reception of the concept of social heritage are examples of misconceptions pertaining to the process of learning on the one hand and to the content of the outcome on the other hand.

I have quoted Fatima's Rules because like the way are phrased: They state succinctly what is believed to be the case. This is the reason why I have tried to align my summary of the reception of social heritage to this way of phrasing.

That way I can present an array of misconceptions without being too roundabout about it.

### **The First Kind:**

The following misconceptions about the process of learning have been observed by me among my students. I have not done anything to establish the exact prevalence, or anything a kin to that, but I am confident that they exist (or have existed) to some extent among my students.

Here they are:

- 1) A new and difficult word will have an exact translation in a word of everyday language.
  - a. When you find that word in everyday language you will have uncovered the full meaning of the new and difficult word.
  - b. New and difficult words are like fashion garments: They signal that you are among the select few. That is you are a snob.
  - c. An example of a general idea equals the general idea. So when I get confused by the second example of the general idea, the teacher tells me about, it is due to the teacher being confusing – not to my initial failure of grasping the general idea.
- 2) In the end – when you cut the crap – it is always a matter of how I show obedience.
  - a. "Controversial" and "debateable" means "this is a line of inquiry to be avoided.
  - b. If the teacher criticises you for the WAY you have dealt with a problem – for instance an attempt to make a case for a controversial view – abandon the effort to solve the problem altogether.
  - c. Always be extra attentive when the teacher says things like "Be careful not to" and "It is dangerous to"
- 3) The course is basically a procedure designed to reveal my innate abilities – or lack thereof – to practise the profession. I will be proven to be worthy or exposed as unworthy. If I get recognition it is for being what I am already. So why don't the teachers skip all the talking

- about the subject of the course, and go straight to the only relevant thing: Am I good enough?
- 4) There is a right way to do things – such as practising a profession or writing a paper - that can be told straightforward, but the teacher refuses to tell us about it in order not to make it too easy. (Or maybe because of sheer incompetence.)
  - 5) The point of any statement from a teacher will always be something along these lines: 'Always do this' or 'never do that'. Often he obviously talks about something else. That is only because he likes to hear himself speak. I shut my ears and wait until he comes to the point. Which he often fails to do. Maybe he is not competent to do his job.
  - 6) The names of theories and theoreticians are incantations to be used for protection in the rites of passage of submitting papers and making presentations.
  - 7) Don't express yourself too clearly in papers or presentations. You may get pinned down on it.
  - 8) Demonstrating insights that I have gained in other subjects than this is forbidden.
  - 9) Teachings about different theoretical approaches are teachings about where to put my allegiance.
  - 10) Teaching is giving. When you give, you give a thing.
    - a. If I can't pinpoint a thing such as a handout or a tool, a thing to say at exam, that I have received, I haven't received anything.
      - i. That is, despite the fact that I was all ears and witnessed new and astonishing perspectives during the class, I didn't learn anything.
      - ii. And when I do receive handouts; they are not representations of what I learned but the very thing I learned.
  - 11) Considering my own preconceptions of the subject matter before reading a textbook is a waste of time as my preconceptions may be wrong and the textbook always being right.
  - 12) Lack of consensus between theoretical approaches bear witness the fact that none of them really know what they are talking about.

These misconceptions are not easy to detect. They may well thrive among students who smile at you and praise your abilities as a teacher. And when you counsel students about assignments or projects you may hear them express beliefs of a strain very different from the one delineated above, only to find out at a later time that they did so just to please you.

The misconceptions reveal themselves in the cracks: When you hear I group of students talking to each other expressing themselves freely as they are unaware of your long, listening ears. Maybe you hear them express themselves freely because someone else is their teacher or because they for some reason have chosen to confide some of their normally hidden beliefs to you in a counselling session.

Sometimes they reveal themselves through expressions which, like Freudian slips, betray thoughts that are unsaid and maybe only partially conscious. As when a student mutters "nah – because it is not supposed to be too easy" and when you gently ask her to expand on that; she may confide to you what lies behind or she may say something like "oh – it's nothing really".

As the years go by, you develop a repertoire of ideas as to what students may think, that can affect their work in an unproductive way. Sometimes these ideas may act as self fulfilling hypothesis when I in the course of – say – a counselling session in a Goffmanian way (Goffman 1967 p 5 ff) offer one of the beliefs as a line they can take. But on other occasions the expression of relief in the face of the student bears witness to me having hit the nail on the head, when I give her reassurance that I regard such beliefs among students as normal, understandable and forgivable.

To be sure, sometimes they are very easy to detect: As when a student moans "Why all this explaining – Just tell us what to do" The question clearly being a rhetorical one.

People like Biggs (1987), his predecessors and followers have detected similar unproductive beliefs about the process of learning among students in higher education. He subsumes these beliefs under three headings: The achieving-, the surface- and the deep processing strategy. The latter being the good strategy with the good and productive beliefs. We owe this and many other discoveries to the line of research called 'phenomenography'.

Very much in the same vein there is the tradition of research in the hidden curriculum. Curriculum proper as opposed to hidden curriculum or unintended curriculum (Martin 1994 p 155) is the curriculum we wish the students will learn

The unintended curriculum is the when students mediates – often in direct contrast to the intended outcomes – the curricular and contextual factors into adaptive strategies, behaviours and attitudes (Ibid160 ff). Larson (1995 – The one with Fatima's Rules) writes in this tradition and considers Fatima's Rules to be an adaption to scarcity of time.

### **The Second Kind:**

Misconceptions about the subject matter abound. They are rather easy to detect if a close inquiry is made at oral exams. Doing it too much is not recommendable though if you take pride in students with high marks. There may be a period of a year or two where almost all external examiners are aware of a particular misconception. This has been the case in Danish colleges training social educators and social workers until recently with the misconception Ejrnæs et al (2005) discovered about social heritage. Now that almost all students are warned about the questions they may face, they are mostly prepared.

This has given rise to a new misconception. It goes like this:

- Social heritage does not exist any more.

How about all of the other misconceptions?

Ejrnæs et al (2005) discovered only one misconception concerning social heritage and wrote a book about that made big impact on teaching and exams. There are plenty of other books waiting to be written:

I will list a few of them in the following:

- 1) "Client-centered" means "Hide your agenda"
- 2) "Inclusion" means intervening against problem behaviour is not allowed.
  - a. Similar interpretation of multiculturalism.
- 3) Recognition equals being nice. Being nice equals behaving according to the local code of conduct that happens to apply to you.
- 4) Empowerment means leaving the clients to their own devices.
- 5) Peer counselling is asking questions endowed with a magical power of solving problems as long as you are careful not to give any advice.
- 6) "Culture" is the politically correct way of referring to race.
- 7) "Habitus" is the new fangled way of saying "personality".
- 8) "Appreciative" means that problems and complaints are taboo.
- 9) The fact that neglect can cause severe disturbances in child development means that you can blame it on the mother every time you encounter problematic behaviour.
- 10) Communications skills are the ability to say bad things in a nice way.

## How Do the Students Manage to Get It Wrong?

The headline above is somewhat misleading. If the question is investigated a little further it soon becomes apparent that the students are not alone in the process of getting it wrong: People in the field of practice – especially those deriving their prestige from being experienced – lecturers in college attracting attention from students in ways that are conducive to the misconceptions and more general societal phenomena are among the factors playing parts that are at least as crucial as the parts of the students.

I will use two overlapping metaphors to describe the dynamic factors which combine to shape the misconceptions.

The first metaphor is the metaphor of the market: In this line of thinking the misconceptions must be passed on or – in other words – traded in order to spread. In order for this to take place, there has to be a demand and a supply for the misconceptions.

In this case the demand is simply ears willing to pay attention.

And the supply is mouths willing and able to tell.

In this vein I will explain why ears are willing to pay attention and where mouths get the raw material to make their stories and the urge to tell them. – This line of thinking aligns with the emerging field of the economy of attention represented by scholars such as Frank (1999).

The second metaphor is the metaphor of biological life: Life in a very broad sense consists of repeated cycles of selection, variation and replication. Collective mental life is guided by memes (see Blackmore 2000) such as catchy tunes, jokes and dogma. Although the aforementioned phenomena are different in many respects they are similar in the respect that there are powers acting in favour of their replication:

- 1) There are mechanisms to select. In this case mechanisms to select stories or ideas supporting the misconceptions. These mechanisms are homologous to the demand side in the market metaphor.
- 2) There are entities replicating. In this case the stories supporting the misconceptions are the replicating entities. These stories have to derive their content from somewhere. They have to feed upon something. This osmosis of content is homologous to the supply side in the market metaphor.
- 3) There must be a place where the selection between different variations takes place. I will call such a place "The Breeding Ground".

The beauty of the latter metaphor is that the etymology of the word "(mis)conception" coincides with the metaphor of breeding. I don't expect such aesthetic considerations to be accepted as an argument. But it can't be a counterargument either.

The structure of the following sections that ultimately get summarized in a causal flowchart is in accordance with the line of reasoning delineated above.

### The Breeding Ground for Misconceptions (The Market)

There are plenty of more or less formal occasions and places where students meet students, where practitioners meet practitioners and where practitioners meet students. Most of the time they will have a good time chatting about a variety subjects. One of these subjects is bound to be college. Mostly the enrichments, experiences and/or humiliations from the learning processes - including rumours and stories about the lecturers - but also, though to a lesser degree, about the subject matter in which they received or receive training.

These occasions and these places are the potential breeding grounds of the misconceptions. It is not only misconceptions that are passed on on these occasions. But when they are passed on, it is on these occasions.

On some of the occasions there may even be a college lecturer or two present. If they don't appear to be vocal defenders of the academic perspective, they may not be a hindrance for airing misconceptions – at least not in my experience.

### **Powers Acting in Favour of Selecting Stories Supporting Misconceptions on the Breeding Ground (The Demand)**

In the field of practice reference to long experience and successful endeavours is almost awe-inspiring. In the face of an audience of young students this will especially be the case. So imagine the disappointment of a practitioner who is used to be held in high regard, when she gets low grades at exam, of a CPE course. It is experienced as an offence.

"What is the matter with these guys?" She may ask herself and a lot of other people in the field who willingly listens as they hold her in high regard. And if anybody has an answer or two to her question she will reward them with her kind attention, which will be precious to them as they think highly of her.

This practitioner may even be someone who passes as a capacity with reliable theoretical knowledge. Having such a standing is a part her prestige and power and challenging the validity of her knowledge will be tantamount to challenging her position in the hierarchy.

For many college people – that is lecturers and their pet students – challenging knowledge is a stimulating game that they readily engage in if an opportunity for doing so arises. If it is also an opportunity for them flash their knowledge of some very new theory or counterintuitive scientific results so much the better. Such an approach – which is rewarded in a college context – poses a constant threat to the aforementioned practitioner.

For her it is not a game. It is life or death to her cherished position as the one who knows best. So if there is anybody who has a story to tell that blurs the difference between practices sanctioned by our prestigious practitioner and practices which new knowledge from college will render recommendable, she will be all ears. The stories blurring the difference are best as they muster the prestige of college in support of her position. But in the absence of such stories; a story discrediting college will do just fine.

Prestigious practitioners – though they are the richest costumers to traders of stories - are not the only ones who willingly will lend ears to stories blurring the distinction between present theories of practice and new ideas. There is – at least – one more source of demand for such stories: That is all the people who experience learning as a loss of competence:

Atherton (2008) has made a convincing case that many items of knowledge entail unlearning old ways. In the slip between unlearning old ways and not yet having learned the new ways there is an interim where the level of performance drops. It is not only when you have to unlearn typing with two fingers in order to type with ten your performance drops.

It is also when you have to make inclusive education, be an active listener, have an open agenda and many other things colleges like to teach their students you will experience an initial – and maybe, who knows, even permanent – drop in performance.

So embracing the new ways is not just a win-win situation. There will be an initial and potentially permanent drop in performance perhaps alongside with feelings of guilt for the ways things have been done hitherto. Not everybody is willing to pay the cost.

And this is where this story would end if everybody just accepted the unwillingness to pay the cost. But everybody does not just accept this reluctance. When you attend college as a student you will probably face a barrage of challenges to this reluctance from the lecturer and the pet students alike. In such a situation you will reward stories offered in the breeding ground that will make you think better of yourself than you might otherwise do with gratitude.

These are the powers acting in favour of selecting stories on the breeding ground that either blur the difference between practitioner theories of practice and theories as taught in college or simply discredits college. These stories do not necessarily have to be untrue. There is no doubt that true stories will be selected. But truth is by no means the only selection criteria, and not always the most important. And even if the singular stories are true or have a ring of truth, the views of college teachings they convey may very well be false..

In fact the criteria outlined in this section by which they get selected will assure that they convey a view of college teachings very much in line with the arrays of misconceptions I have delineated in the previous sections of this paper.

The fact that there are other criteria as well does not change the fact that the aforementioned criteria are operative in the selection process.

### **What the Stories Feed Upon. (The Supply)**

The most important nourishment is the ring of truth there is for many of the stories due to the ring of truth there is to some of the misconceptions. The most important rings of truth are in the findings of the sociology of education:

Bourdieu (1984) established that the educational system recognizes habitual mannerisms and orientations that the students have soaked up during their upbringing in an environment rich of cultural capital rather than the formal skills as described in the syllabus.

Collins (2002) makes it clear that "*Credential inflation is largely supply driven, not demand driven; it is driven by the expansion of schooling, like a government printing more paper money, not from demand by the economy for an increasingly educated labour force. The opposing theory, that rising educational requirements have been determined by the functional requirements of jobs in the modern economy, does not hold up under the evidence*"

So education and knowledge is not necessarily adding value in the field of practice but is more like the bubble that was seen recently in the housing market. Everybody invests in it because everybody invests in it. Like a government printing more paper money.

Sokal and Bricmont (1998) were a finger pointing at an emperor with no clothes on when they managed to publish an article in a peer reviewed postmodern academic journal which they had crafted carefully to be sheer pointless gibberish loaded with references to Foucault and fashionable intellectual phrases.

The fact that the aforementioned have made a case for their claim is truly subversive to the effort of bringing real knowledge to make a real value adding difference in the field of practice.

The ring of truth is not the only fodder the stories thrive upon: An important source of energy comes from the psychodynamics of defence mechanisms. Kegan (1994) has shown through measuring the level of maturity of approximately one thousand adult Americans that the majority of students are not or are only just mature enough to be self directed learners.

Assuming the responsibility to decide for themselves what is relevant and what is not is provoking deep anxiety. Kegan (ibid p. 280) quotes the following statement from a student in response to a course in smart reading: "*Directing the purpose of my reading does totally change the way I read, what I retain, what I can do with what I read. But tell me this: How do I know that my questions will be my professor's questions? How do I know that my purposes will be her purposes?*"

The demand to be a self directing learner provokes anxiety if you are not on a level of maturity that allows you to take the responsibilities of a CEO.

This is actually the demands made upon students in higher education. In the face of this overwhelming reality most of the students are in a state of denial. When reality is that scary, the

reality principle is not an option. The alternatives are the defence mechanisms: Regressions into magical thinking.

Try listening to some of the questions, students ask when they have to write an assignment. Try listening to where these questions come from. Some of them are deeply infantile.

All this is delivering a burst of creativity, energy and desperation behind a story production.

The most obvious defence mechanism is denial: “He is not trying to teach me what he straightforward says he is – there must be some other hidden message.” Such a denial can generate many misconceptions of which some are fit for selection on the breeding ground.

There are two more things feeding the supply side of the misconceptions: Both of them producing experiences in college to confirm the misconceptions:

The first one owes its existence to teachers being desperate to catch the attention of students. Not having the student's attention can make a lecturer panic. Panic is a tension that requires immediate relief. Directly asking the students why they don't pay attention could be a face threatening move. So what are the alternatives?

You could of course ignore the lack of attention. But if you make a habit of this you will lose touch of what makes sense to the students.

Or you could speak to the student's immediate hopes and fears. If you imply that it is a matter of obedience, or say you have the precise recipe for action in the field or particular thing you should say or avoid to say in order to pass exam – the students will be all ears.

Of course a better solution will be not to panic – but that is easier said than done. This panic is the first thing producing experiences in college to confirm the misconceptions.

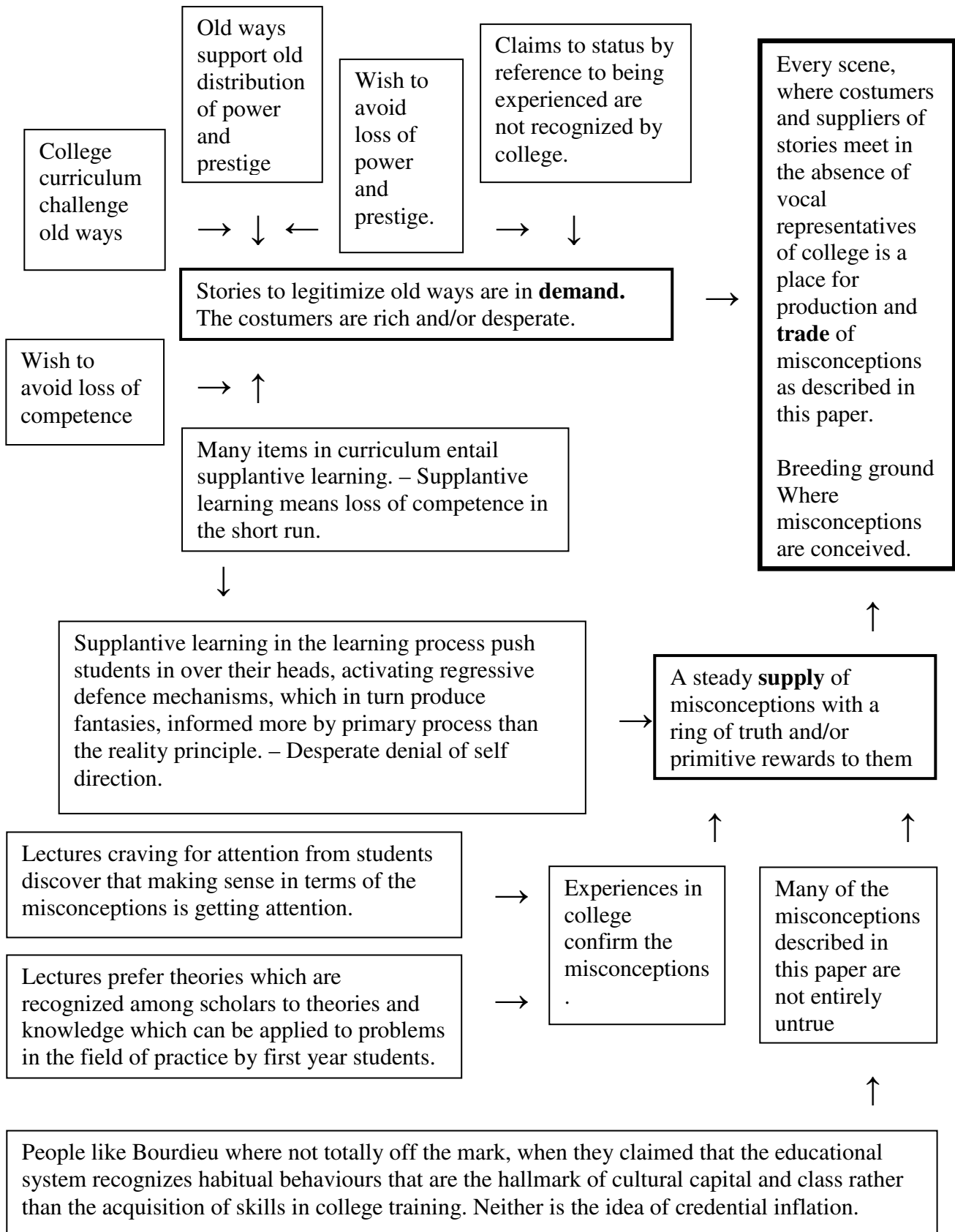
The second does not owe its existence to the drive for getting the students attention. Here it is the admiring or envying attention of the peers – other lectures – that is at stake. This is one of the sources of the tendency to inflate curriculum. (This is not the same as credential inflation) to make it look more opulent with a large quantity of theories or with very sophisticated theories without the more basic theories and knowledge it takes to understand them.

It looks as if the students are educated on a very high level if names such as Habermas, Luhman or Foucault are featured on the curriculum. But the looks are deceiving as it takes a considerable lot of more basic knowledge to make any sensible application of such theories. Thus confirming the notion that theories are more like fashion garments or magical incantations rather than ways to transform your perspective.

See next page for a flow chart that summarize the above points.

I admit that it is speculative but I will maintain that it is not unfounded.

### Flowchart of Factors Explaining the Arise of Misconceptions.



## And What To Do About It?

The above flowchart may give the impression that it is all or mostly a matter of college versus the fields of practice. The fact that the cleavages are more diverse than that does not alter the dynamics delineated in the flowchart.

### Identify and kill fallacies.

The most obvious approach to misconceptions would be to treat them as fallacies. In this approach all the information conveyed in this paper after the descriptions of the misconceptions must be considered as obsolete.

Knowing the misconceptions must be a sufficient basis for starting to teach the students otherwise. The whole idea of using fallacies as a basis for teaching in higher education has been discussed for some length between Hitchcock (1995) and Blair (1995). They both make several points. In my opinion the most important point made by Hitchcock (ibid p. 325) is that basing the teaching on fallacies will tend to produce a state a kin to the Spanish Inquisition with the lecturer as a hanging judge. My experiences with some external examiners in Denmark clamping down on social heritage are confirming this notion.

### Let the students in on the matter

Another line of thinking would be to share the thoughts presented in this paper, some of them or similar thoughts with the students. Thus making them responsible for the choices they make if they chose to believe in the misconceptions. To me such an approach is so appealing that I have tried it several times and in several ways for many years. I am under the impression – though I am not entirely sure – that slight chances for the better can be obtained this way. Careful empirical investigations might produce conclusive evidence. But it will have to be a rather large sample, because the effect hardly will be dramatic.

### Reform the faculty

Yet another approach would be to coordinate the efforts of all the teachers in the faculty so no one did anything to confirm the misconceptions and we all tried to help the students getting rid of them in a gentle way without acting as hanging judges. It would be nice if it could be done this way. Just as nice as if Santa Claus had been real. It might actually work. It probably would work if it was possible to coordinate the efforts of the lectures in the faculty this way.

But the attempt to do so will run into the very same difficulties for the very same reasons as the difficulties that arise from teaching the students to transform: Either the distinction between the existing practice and the one proposed here will be blurred ("We already do this") or the sender of the message will be discredited. ("It is too/not enough theoretical")

To be sure it will not be everybody who does so. It doesn't have to be. The misconceptions can easily thrive on just a few keeping them alive.

### Give up curriculum and give people what they say they need.

Maybe we should ask ourselves who has called for the help we offer through our curriculum.

Maybe we should make a meticulous inquiry as to what the students and the field of practice need seen from their own perspective before we make any planning of the curriculum whatsoever. Who are we to decide what they need?

The answer must be nonthreatening environments where everybody can speak honestly about their real needs whether it is among lectures, students or practitioners. Or whether it is between lecturers, students and practitioners. If faces, claims to power is not threatened; .if fear of losing attention is

Student's Misconceptions Discrediting College and/or Inhibiting Transformative Learning. - How do They Arise? – What to Do?

"Paper presented in workshop at 7<sup>th</sup> FESET Seminar "Social pedagogical approaches in social professions" Osnabrück 22-24 april.

not invoked; if knowledge that adds real value in the field of practice is offered; then the spell will be broken. Then all the causes that produce the misconceptions have been eliminated.

To create such a utopia we will have to do away with the concept of curriculum altogether. The curriculum will always be threatening to somebody.

The process will be all. Of course there will be content. But it will be the needs and process that generates the criteria selecting what content will be relevant.

This is certainly not likely to happen worldwide. Or even faculty wide.

But chances will be there in a small scale on limited occasions where the circumstances are right.

And the flowchart will be a useful tool to identify which circumstances to look for.

Maybe we could seize the opportunity some of the times.

The rest of the time we will essentially have to live with the misconceptions and settle for correcting one or two when it is possible and appropriate.

**Atherton** James S. (2008) Doceo; Learning as Loss I [On-line] UK: Available:

[http://www.doceo.co.uk/original/learnloss\\_1.htm](http://www.doceo.co.uk/original/learnloss_1.htm) Accessed: 10 March 2010

**Biggs**, John. (1987). Student Approaches to Learning and Studying. Hawthorn AU: Australian Council for Educational Research.

**Blackmore**, Susan (2000) The Meme Machine Oxford University Press

**Blair**, Anthony J (1995). The Place of Teaching Informal Fallacies in Teaching Reasoning Skills or Critical Thinking In: Hansen, Hans V & Pinto Robert C (ed) "Fallacies: Classical and Contemporary Readings" University Park . Penn State Press

**Bourdieu**, Pierre (1984) Distinction – A social Critique of the Judgement of Taste. Routledge and Kegan, Paul Ltd.

**Collins**, Randall (2002). Credential Inflation and the Future of Universities. In Steve Brint (ed.), *The Future of the City of Intellect*. Stanford: Stanford University

**Ejrnæs**, Morten et al (2005) Social opdrift –social arv. Akademisk Forlag.

**Engberg**, Mark E. (2004) Improving Intergroup Relations in Higher Education: A Critical Examination of the Influence of Educational Interventions on Racial Bias Review of Educational Research, Vol. 74, No. 4, 473-524 (2004)

**Franck**, G. (1999), The Economy of Attention, At: Telepolis

<http://www.heise.de/tp/r4/artikel/5/5567/1.html> Accessed: 18 April 2010).

**Goffman**, Ervin (1967) Interaction Ritual – Essays in Face to Face Behaviour Aldine Pub. Chicago.

**Hitchcock**, David (1995) .Do the Fallacies Have a Place in Teaching? In: Hansen, Hans V & Pinto Robert C (ed) "Fallacies: Classical and Contemporary Readings" University Park . Penn State Press

**Kegan**, Robert (1994) In Over Our Heads – The Mental Demands of Modern Life: Harvard

**Larson**, Jane O. (1995) "Fatima's Rules and Other elements of an Unintended Chemistry Curriculum." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

**Martin**; Jane Roland (1994 (1976)) What should We Do With a Hidden Curriculum when We Find One? In Changing the Educational Landscape – Philosophy, Women and Curriculum. Ed: Jane Roland Martin

**Mezirow**, Jack. (1991). Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

**Ramsden**, Paul (1992) Learning to Teach in Higher Education Routledge Falmer

**Sokal**, Alan & Bricmont Jean (1998) Intellectual Impostures Profile Books