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Abstract

What should pre-service teachers know about the teacher's authority? Teacher educators recognize that all teachers will face challenges to their authority to teach. As do professors, teachers will face these challenges throughout their careers, almost certainly beginning during their practice teaching. To that end, most pre-service teachers study classroom management, either in a free-standing class on the topic or as part of other curriculum and instruction courses.

Coercion and Consent: Helping Pre-Service Teachers Understand Classroom Authority

Kenneth Badley

What should pre-service teachers know about the teacher's authority? Teacher educators recognize that all teachers will face challenges to their authority to teach. As do professors, teachers will face these challenges throughout their careers, almost certainly beginning during their practice teaching. To that end, most pre-service teachers study classroom management, either in a free-standing class on the topic or as part of other curriculum and instruction courses.

That the phrase *the teacher's authority* induces so many in- and pre-service teachers to think first of the challenges of classroom management points to an important truncation of our understanding of the teacher's authority. Some writers about education (for example, Charles & Barr, 1989; Dubelle & Hoffman, 1986), but certainly not all (for example, Alschuler, 1980; Bantock, 1966; Spady, 1977) tend to truncate classroom management to a set of techniques or skills, so that it occupies a separate silo from several wider matters, all of which intimately connect to the teacher's authority. These include the classroom ethos, the student's embrace of the curriculum and acceptance of the teacher's instructional methods and assessment system, and, for Christians, the teacher as winsome evidence of the indwelling Christ and as testimony to Christ's claims on all aspects of classroom work.

Pre-service teachers and veterans alike readily recognize the importance of a teacher's authority when a student or parent challenges that authority. But teachers' authority, or lack of it, has to do with a thousand other scenes in a typical school year. New voices (Harjunen, 2009; Yariv, 2009) continue to join a long parade of calls for greater attention to and deeper understanding of the teacher's authority. Pre-service teachers and teachers in their induction cycle need to understand several crucial aspects of the teacher's authority,

including, minimally, those in the catalogue appearing below. I present this catalogue as an accessible review of research on authority and as a first step in the necessary reinscription of classroom management and the teacher's authority within the proper, much larger context of the classroom ethos. Following a thorough study of the literature on authority in general and the teacher's authority, and recognizing how little attention teacher educators give teachers' authority outside the silo of discipline and classroom management, I have concluded that both pre-service and seasoned teachers need to understand and create classrooms in accordance with the following observations about authority (which are indented and numbered below for later reference).

Thirteen assertions about the teacher's authority

1. Classroom authority is complex, important, practical and dynamic.
2. The teacher's authority is best—and perhaps only—understood with reference to a taxonomy of types and sources of authority and with reference to the concept of classroom ethos. Authority derives from such sources as charisma, tradition, contracts, titles, expertise, God, spiritual depth, passion or conviction, the self, the consent of those over whom one has charge, one's gender (Kuhn, 1992) and a host of lesser factors. Additionally, some view coercive power as a form of authority (for example, Dalton, Barnes, & Zaleznik, 1968). Teachers must understand the crucial difference between coercive power and consent (which many call legitimacy). They need to know that successful exercise of their authority as teachers requires that they possess and demonstrate, over the long haul, a combination of at least several kinds of authority, some of

- them perhaps surprising to the pre-service or induction teacher.
3. Classroom management includes a range of questions, of which responding to misbehaviors and dealing with discipline problems are only a part. Unfortunately, many teachers and writers about classrooms treat classroom management as a stand-alone question, the answer to which is discipline and the maintenance of order. In fact, managing a classroom includes curriculum, course, unit and lesson planning, developing and employing naturally a wide repertoire of instructional methods appropriate to contents and students' ages and abilities, promoting and assessing student learning, developing record-keeping and paper-flow systems, interacting with students in a friendly yet professional way throughout each work day, and so on.
 4. Because the connections to maintaining order and dealing with misbehaviors and discipline problems have eclipsed all other meanings of the phrase, *classroom management*, educators should not expend time and resources trying to widen or re-widen its meaning. Rather, educators should speak of the *classroom ethos*, recognizing that what some call classroom management is but a part, although obviously an important part, of classroom ethos.
 5. People use the important phrase, *the teacher's authority*, to convey a variety of overlapping and sometimes contradictory meanings. By this phrase, some mean the teacher's possession of coercive power to force students to behave in certain ways. By way of contrast, I imply the willing consent granted by students for the teacher to bring into being an instructional program in the kind of teaching and learning space – the classroom ethos – that teacher wishes to create. This range of meanings indicates the need for clarification and explication of *the teacher's authority*.
 6. The authoritarian classroom (law unbounded by love), in which the teacher relies on coercive power, creates an atmosphere inimical to learning. Some teachers facing discipline problems may be tempted to move toward this kind of classroom without knowing that it will hinder learning, and will secure, at best, only minimal behavioral compliance, while actually engendering resentment and possibly creating further behavioral problems.
 7. The permissive classroom (love unbounded by law), in which the teacher grants students too much license, also creates an atmosphere inimical to learning. Teachers facing discipline problems may also be tempted to move, in incremental steps, toward this kind of classroom. While at each step toward this classroom, the teacher may avoid an unwanted argument, over the long-term, undue instructional time is wasted on negotiations, and disorder may finally prevail, negating the momentary benefits of each concession granted along the way.
 8. Authority understood as good will or consent creates classroom relationships and levels of trust which can, in their turn, lead to abuses such as the voluntary surrender of student intellectual autonomy, or boundary violations within dual relationships.
 9. While complex, classroom authority is not overly mysterious. Teachers have available and must draw constantly from a repertoire of specific strategies and ways of carrying out their day-to-day tasks that will create the positive and productive classroom ethos in which they gain, maintain and work with the consent of their students to carry out their instructional program.
 10. Scripture offers essential perspectives on authority and its exercise in classrooms.
 11. Besides whatever other authority teachers derive from such sources as God, their charisma, their contract or their expertise, teachers ultimately must authorize themselves to teach.
 12. Just as students need to authorize their teachers, teachers need to authorize their students. Authorizing students, as I mean it here, does not diminish the teacher's authority. Rather, as students find themselves visible, recognized, smart and expert in the teaching and learning space, they increase their good will toward and thereby further authorize their teacher, consenting more fully to their teacher's execution of the duties of the

teaching office, especially the execution of the teaching-learning program.

13. Those in teacher training settings need to aid their pre-service teachers in understanding the above principles and the connections between them.

Recognizably, I have offered a lengthy list of rather bold assertions about what teachers—especially beginning teachers—need to know about authority. At this point, I decline to defend the length of the list or the inclusion of any of the individual claims that populate it. Furthermore, in this article I make no attempt to address all thirteen of these bold (and, thus far, unsupported) assertions. I give this article over to exploring two inter-related distinctions raised in the assertions numbered 2 through 5. First, I distinguish at some length between coercive power (which some equate with authority) and understandings of authority as consent or legitimacy. Second, I explore the distinction between classroom management and classroom ethos. Understanding the second distinction rests on an understanding of the first, so I will begin by distinguishing power and consent. Both distinctions depend on one's possessing at least a cursory grasp of the many understandings of authority, so I precede my discussion of the two distinctions with this taxonomy of authority.

A taxonomy of classroom authority

Having stated that one can understand these two distinctions only by setting the questions within a taxonomy, I offer below a briefly annotated catalogue of kinds or sources of classroom authority, beginning where almost all authority discussions begin, with Max Weber's original list of three kinds. Of course, many others have analyzed authority and its couched concepts at much greater depth than I will do here (Chandler, 2008; Clegg, 1975; H. Collins & Evans, 2007; Donovan, Fjellestad, & Lundén, 2008; Etzioni, 1961; Flathman, 1980; Foucault, 1977; Friedrich, 1972; Givens, 2007; Habermas, 1973; Harris, 1976b; Hobbes, 1651, 1950; Isaac, 2007; Lamont, 2009; Linscott, 1993; Moulakis, 1986; Nyberg & Farber, 1986; O'Brien, 2007; Pazmiño, 1994; Peters, 1959; Schouls, 1972; Sennett, 1980; Sergiovanni, 1992; Weldon, 1953).

I begin with *charismatic authority*. People consider another person an authority because of his or her

exceptional abilities or character (Weber, 1947, 1968). Although we now nuance the word *charismatic* somewhat differently from Weber's sense, the commonalities remain clear. Some teachers gain authority by force of their personality, for example, **Adrian Cronauer**, the madly comic EOSL teacher played by Robin Williams in *Good Morning Vietnam* (Levinson & Markowitz, 1988) or the persevering violin teacher, **Roberta Guaspari**, portrayed by Meryl Streep in *Music of the Heart* (Craven & Gray, 1999). But we need not look only to cinema for examples. Partly by sheer force of personality, Jaime Escalante, of Garfield High in East Los Angeles, helped an unusual number of students achieve Advanced Placement standing in mathematics (Matthews, 1986). Secondary teachers took inspiration when Jay Matthews' story, *Escalante: Best Teacher in America*, came to the screen as *Stand and Deliver* (Menéndez & Musca, 1988). Teachers at any stage in their careers can take an important and ultimately encouraging lesson from both cinematic and real-life charismatic teachers: charisma may gain a teacher (or politician or anyone) a hearing devoid of initial resistance, but a school year lasts longer than a film, and charismatic authority alone will not gain a teacher a year's space to realize his or her teaching program. Subject-area expertise, pedagogical competence and a pool of good will (Dreeben, 1968, 1970) will compensate for whatever charismatic deficits a teacher starts with in September.

Weber identified *traditional authority* as that which rested "... on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them" (1968, p. 215). Intuitively, one wants to agree with Weber that some people gain authority through sheer longevity. They end up in positions of authority and become the gatekeepers of the tradition simply by working within their respective institutions for a long time (Allan, 1986; Hughes, 1978).

Weber also identified *legal* or *rational* authority, which many call *constituted* or *contractual* authority. Based on the policies of an organization or the laws of a jurisdiction, this person has the authority to hold a certain office for a period of time. By occupying said office, the officeholder thereby gains specified

rights and assumes specified responsibilities (usually along with several unspecified responsibilities). This category often arrives already married to traditional authority, inasmuch as people become pope or gain promotion to partner in a legal firm because they represent the tradition. Weber considers constitutional authority rational because, in his view, people are put in authority because they have recognizable expertise. This third category obviously connects with our concern for classroom authority. As has been argued elsewhere, the teacher may succeed while lacking both age and charisma (Badley, 2009, April) but when an educational authority with the legal right to do so offers a teacher a contract, that teacher may plan, prepare and give instruction, evaluate students' work and carry out the other duties of a teacher. To anticipate my later point, however, any teacher attempting to carry out the duties of that office based on their constituted authority alone will almost certainly encounter resistance.

Titular authority, that symbolized by a title, *credential* or *certificate* (Adelmann, 1974; R. Collins, 1979), may link the expertise and legal/rational authority of Weber's schema. The certificate recognizes achievement or completion and the holder of that certificate expects those working near him or her to recognize its symbolism (Adelmann, 1974; Clark, 2006; De George, 1976). In at least a minimal way, most students will recognize this symbol (with reference to their teachers), along with the whole set of arrangements in place in their classrooms. But the limit of such students' patience usually correlates inversely with their age, and teachers should not expect their students to grant many days of unearned authority (and instructional time) on the basis of their degrees alone. For my purposes here, I want simply to assume that the credential question has been answered satisfactorily; the teacher has a degree.

Weber subsumed *competence* or *expertise* under the category of rational authority, but teachers who follow those of Weber's calling for sharper separation of the legal and rational (Dalton et al., 1968; Martineau, 1905; Spady, 1977) will understand classroom authority more clearly. Pre-service teachers, recent inductees and veterans alike need to view their expertise as a necessary but not sufficient condition to enter a classroom (H. Collins & Evans, 2007; De George, 1985). I claimed above

that constituted authority alone would likely engender resistance from most students. Likewise, most students will not grant teachers the room to teach on the basis of expertise alone. In fact, one researcher found that the teachers facing the greatest resistance were those who most stridently highlighted their contractual authority, especially if their behavior came bundled with a lack of expertise (Metz, 1978).

Readers of this journal perhaps have greater familiarity than some teacher educators with claims to a God-given call to teach, a type of claim *to divine authority* (Harris, 1976a; Moore, 1979). Some readers may, in fact, teach their pre-service teachers not even to enter teaching unless they do so in response to some kind of divine call or voice. As long as we recognize that claims to divine authority can be subject to abuse, as some have warned (Quebedeux, 1982) and others have illustrated (for example, Nee, 1972), I make no objection to such teaching, and agree with many others about the importance of the call to teach (Buijs, 2005; Durka, 2002; Ferguson & William, 2003; Hansen, 1994; Palmer, 1998; Placher, 2005; Williams, Massaro, Airhart, & Zikmund, 2004). The necessity or benefits of callings notwithstanding, teacher candidates leaving our programs must understand that assurance of a call, while it may help sustain them during difficult times, will not by itself compel students to join teacher in realizing their program. Authority may well derive from God but teachers exercise their authority only as those over whom they have charge authorize them to do so in an ongoing way.

Very briefly, we encounter another claim to divine authority when a Christian or group of Christians establishes an intentionally Christian school (De Jong & Van Dyke, 1981; Fennema, 1977; Lockerbie, 1972; Oppewal, 1963; Sheed, 1935; Van Brummelen, 1986; Wolterstorff, 2004). This claim to a divine call obviously has features that overlap those of the individual teacher's sense of a divine call to teach.

In recognition of apparent depth and wisdom, students sometimes grant teachers a kind of *spiritual authority*. Teachers may gain this kind of authority even from those who disagree with some of their convictions if they consistently demonstrate the qualities that we associate with spirituality: mindfulness, listening, depth of interior

life and perhaps high ethical standards. One thinks of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Mohandas Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, all of whom demonstrated something qualitatively different from what Weber described as charisma and or we ordinarily call integrity or force of personality. These three examples – two Christians and one Hindu – make clear that that we may disagree fundamentally with the worldview of the other but still consider him or her a spiritual authority.

In most jurisdictions, a *Schools Act* or *Education Act* requires or *forces* children to attend school until they reach a specified age or complete a specified grade. Undeniably, such laws benefit society by ensuring that the majority of a population achieve a minimal level of education. The unfortunate inverse of this minimal level of education for a population, of course, is that teachers and students must do their work in a coercive atmosphere, which may not be conducive to learning.

The first sense of coercion related to schools is this background level of coercion present in all schools where laws compel children to attend and in all classrooms where one person holds the office of teacher and others attend as students. But teachers possess another form of *coercive authority* – the threat of sanctions – under which students must attempt to learn. Teachers and schools are at liberty to implement various kinds of punishments and sanctions in those cases where a student fails to meet certain behaviour, attendance or academic standards. We recognize that in a world where sin remains at work, schools and teachers will, from time to time, need to lean back on their coercive power. Teachers periodically find themselves responding to coercion, even in mild forms such as deadlines, when their free will fails to move them to needed courses of action. If the ambient coercion of schools is, in fact, inimical to learning, then the use of this additional coercive power (Adelmann, 1974; Airiksinen, 1988), while necessary to deal with some students at some times, presents teachers with a higher-level barrier to their educational program at many other times. Coercion warrants more careful consideration, and we will return to it in the next section.

The film *Freedom Writers* (LaGravenese, 2007), in which Hillary Swank plays real-life teacher, **Erin Gruwell**, contains a powerful scene of *self-authorization*. Her students make clear their wish to

deny their new teacher, who, to them, obviously parachuted in from the clean side of town, any free space to begin enacting her educational program. In a dozen unspoken ways, they demand that she prove herself worthy of their attention. To their surprise, she does exactly that. She shows the *chutzpah* to stand up in front of room full of strangers – suspicious and hostile strangers in this case – and begin teaching. Finally, all teachers have to muster the courage to do this same thing, to authorize themselves, to act the part (Bell, 1975).

Studies of excellence in teaching regularly identify *passion* or *conviction* as traits of good teachers (Sheffield, 1974). Teachers gain or lose some measure of their instructional authority by the measure of excitement they show about teaching and about their subject (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; DeBold, Toman, & Brown, 1996; Pollio & Humphreys, 1996; Reynolds, 1992). Like all the kinds of authority I have listed in this taxonomy, conviction and passion are not sufficient, but they are necessary.

As I argue at length in the next section, teachers' *moral authority* or *earned authority*, while not sufficient in itself, ranks above all others in importance for carrying out their instructional program and for creating a classroom ethos conducive to learning. By moral authority, I mean that the teacher has gained *the good will* or the *consent* of the students; the students have granted the teacher *legitimacy* (Barnard, 1962; Frye, 1982; Jenkins, 1976; Sergiovanni, 1992; Yariv, 2009). How teachers gain, maintain, use and lose this legitimacy must await another treatment. Here, I simply want to include moral authority in this catalogue of types to facilitate exploring the coercion – consent distinction which follows just below. The teacher with the most authority has demonstrated his or her trustworthiness and expertise over time, and has thereby gained the good will of students (and likely colleagues and administrators). That good will, or moral authority, gives the teacher the room to carry out the duties mandated in the Education Act or School Act and his or her contract. In this classroom, the teacher gets the students' commitment, not just their compliance, an exact parallel to the consent / coercion distinction.

The Coercion / Consent Distinction

All teachers need to understand the difference between power and consent. Most successful teachers have learned this distinction through experience, some of it quite unpleasant. To help pre-service teachers avoid such unpleasantness, teacher educators must aid them in understanding this difference before they graduate or, preferably, even before they commence their student teaching. At its simplest, this distinction recognizes at least two ways to bring about compliance with one's wishes, by exercising authority or by using power (Hoekema, 1986; Peters, 1959).

All the kinds of authority listed in foregoing taxonomy bear on teachers and teaching. The writer who identifies any source of authority as a sufficient condition errs, because the many kinds of authority work together to create the conditions necessary for teaching and learning. Nevertheless, these two in particular—coercion and consent—bear special attention, the first because, by definition, an ambient level of coercion already exists in classrooms because students are compelled to attend schools and because teachers are, by definition, in charge (Fisch, 1993). This level of compulsion produces disaffection in some students before the teacher even attempts to commence instruction (Sizer, 1984). More so, coercion warrants examination because when apparent classroom necessities mix with human weaknesses (in both teachers and students) dangerous compounds can result. The second concept of the pair, student consent, bears special attention because, while it functions as one of the base layers of the successful instructional program, many educators seem unaware of its importance.

We turn first to power. In my taxonomy of authority, I briefly outlined a couple features of coercive authority, or what many call power, a topic discussed at length by many before me (Adelmann, 1974; Airiksinen, 1988; Galbraith, 1983; Weldon, 1953). In ordinary language, we usually mean by power that someone or something has the resources to move objects that offer resistance, for example, when an automobile uses its power to pull a travel trailer which exhibits no tendency to move on its own. At its baldest, power implies that one person can force another person do what he or she wants done. Power comes from the top down. Facing power, people recognize their lack of choice—or at least their tightly restricted choice between

obedience and negative consequences—and they obey.

Hobbes addresses precisely this understanding of power. In *Leviathan*, he distinguishes *command*, where a person can expect obedience without having to supply reasons, and *counsel*, where reasons are required (Hobbes, 1651, 1950, ch. 25). The first half of his distinction parallels what I have herein called power.

Decontextualized understandings of classroom discipline and narrow definitions of classroom management (assertion #3 at the beginning of this article) contain an implicit invitation for the teacher to respond from a position of power. At the precise moment the teacher faces a disciplinary situation, his or her immediate objective is to resolve the issue and restore the classroom's learning conditions. In that moment, using power may meet both the teacher's objectives, although it will not so permanently. In even the best classrooms, such situations periodically arise. But the new teacher, lacking the subject-area and pedagogical expertise that he or she will have ten years later, will likely face a sufficient number of disciplinary situations that responding from a coercive posture may become more than periodic.

Sadly, many pre-service and induction teachers lack something as important as expertise in their subject-area and teaching methods; they lack understanding of both this distinction—between power and consent—and the additional distinction between classroom management and classroom ethos. Without these understandings, they may veer toward the authoritarian classroom because it appears at each time to resolve the disciplinary situations that hinder instruction and learning. Half a century ago, Benne identified the negative spiral toward which unbounded order might steer a class:

The stupidity which often inheres in the use of coercive sanctions, by established bearers of authority, in and out of the schoolroom, is not that their use establishes and preserves authority. It is rather that they prevent the establishment of an organic moral order adequate and congenial to the stabilization and guidance of the social process underway – an order morally accepted in some measure as rightful by all participants in the process. In other words, they are to be

condemned as defeating rather than serving the development of an adequate authority (Benne, 1943, p. 149).

Although his language differs from my own, Benne makes the same distinction between coercion and authority that I am making here. His “organic moral order” anticipates what I call the classroom ethos.

Even a cursory scan of the classroom management books in an education library will help explain young teachers’ confusion about these matters. Many writers circumscribe discipline within classroom management (for example, Charles & Barr, 1989; Edwards, 1993). This circumscription may be understandable given social structures where one common image of authority is the agent of law enforcement who operates primarily within a coercive mode (much as he or she might wish to do otherwise). Christians may want to probe this circumscription, perhaps by asking with Tournier (1977) about the psychogenesis of the frequent claim that strong rule is the Biblical norm in face of the Biblical writers’ deep concern about love.

Authoritarianism may bring minimal compliance. Inarguably, it produces other, unintended effects on students and their learning, such as alienation and resentment among students (Hatfield, 1972). But it has wider results as well, one of which is that libertarians point to such understandings of authority and conclude that authority itself is the problem. Some react to the abuses of teacher power by suggesting the creation of free schools (Swidler, 1979; Wild, 1974). Still others, especially induction teachers, react by creating a permissive classroom in the hopes that students will like them and thereby join them on an educational journey. Lapsing into the permissive classroom or creating it intentionally strikes some inductees as a good way to get students on the teacher’s side (Spackman, 1991). They hope that once the students recognize that they, the teacher, are the students’ “Big Friend or Cheer Leader” (Bantock, 1966, p. 22), they will participate fully and willingly in the teacher’s teaching and learning program. Fear of becoming authoritarian also leads some teachers to create – albeit unwittingly perhaps – the negotiational classroom, where arguments about expectations and requirements consume valuable instructional time (McNeil, 1988; Sedlak, Cusick, Wheeler, & Pullin, 1986)

Only rare teachers never need to fall back to a power position. But, to summarize the above, the teacher who relies on coercion too often runs the risks of creating, by increments, an authoritarian classroom. And, long before that classroom becomes truly authoritarian, the teaching and learning atmosphere of the room will already have weakened, leading ultimately to a downward spiral characterized by more discipline problems and possibly even open revolt.

In contrast to power, consider the concept of consent, which I use interchangeably with *moral authority*, *legitimacy*, *good will* and *endorsement* (Bass, 1998; Dornbusch & Scott, 1975; Etzioni, 1959, 1964, 1961; Kelman & Hamilton, 1989; Moulakis, 1986; Werkmeister, 1976). When authority is understood as consent or to rest on consent, those granting the consent, by definition, willingly submit to the authority. Teachers who have earned the right to conduct their classes based on their moral authority rather than on coercion can, by definition, carry on their instructional program largely without student-generated hindrances because the students, for the most part, consider the classroom’s norms to be their own norms (Cleugh, 1971; Dornbusch & Scott, 1975, p. 345; Waller, 1961). Even when teachers find that they must use coercion with a recalcitrant student, they will have the backing of other students if they have gained moral authority in that classroom (Durkheim, 1957).

Compare the scenario of the teacher who operates with nearly full student consent with those teachers who instruct without sufficient consent or who must intervene in disciplinary situations without sufficient consent. In the latter case, teachers may be able to gain temporary and minimal compliance, but they will do so without the moral support of most of the other students in the room.

Is moral authority different from a track record? One cannot miss the obvious parallel that both take time; a person usually accrues moral authority as he or she achieves a track record. Inductee teachers—and seasoned teachers who take up posts in new settings—will likely require time to gain moral authority. During this period of waiting (and inspection and likely testing), they obviously will have to rely somewhat on their expertise, their degree, their contract, the confidence that they

chose teaching in response to a call, and, of course, on their ability to authorize themselves.

Exploring the concept of legitimacy will clarify consent further (Dornbusch & Scott, 1975). Social scientists use this word to mean that the occupant of a position of authority, for example a head of government or a head of state, is justified in occupying that position. Someone who gains office through murder, coercion or a rigged election is said to be illegitimate or, in former days, a pretender (Maurice, 1986; Schabert, 1986). On this account, Dewey Finn, the uncertified teacher imposter played by Jack Black in *The School of Rock* (Linklater & White, 2003), clearly lacks legitimacy. But, in the eyes of students, some certified teachers, even subject-area experts, also teach without legitimacy (and as Jack Black's fable shows, some pretenders have legitimacy thrust upon them). Cinema notwithstanding, if teachers fail to meet the minimal conditions identified by students, they will be considered illegitimate.

Legitimacy can be illuminated further with reference to the world of music. When we ask who authorizes the opera singer, we immediately recognize that the audience must consent to her performance. But before she is ever permitted to stand before her audience, she must be legitimated by music schools, by critics, by other opera society boards. In plain language, these are the people who matter. Teachers need to be authorized by people who matter too, at the university, in the board office, in the school office. But the people who matter most in classrooms are students, and ultimately they grant or withhold the teacher's legitimacy (Knight, 2006; Kouzes & Posner, 1993).

Some teachers refuse to teach from any of the fall-back sources of authority (title, contract, coercion) and thus willingly place themselves into the position of the opera singer; they voluntarily set out to earn all the authority they will exercise in the classroom. In doing so, those teachers embark on a teaching adventure, or perhaps they render teaching an adventure. The teaching-learning space they create serves as an antithesis to the authoritarian classroom I earlier described. These teachers and their classrooms illustrate perfectly the distinction between coercion and consent, and they also help us anticipate the discussion following in which I distinguish classroom management and classroom ethos.

As I near completion of this discussion of coercion and consent, I wish to underline the need for pre-service teachers to understand that expert authority and a contract are not enough. In real teaching, unlike some teacher movies, charisma will not save the day. Even a divine call will not suffice. These are all likely necessary conditions for long-term classroom success, but none is a sufficient condition. Many teachers ignore in practice the truth that moral authority, consent, good will or legitimacy are necessary and must be granted by students. Teachers who know and teach out of this truth will make every effort to teach and interact in ways that build a pool of good will as quickly as possible. And before too much time passes, they will find themselves working in a teaching and learning space in which students have authorized them to carry out their full instructional program.

The Classroom Management / Classroom Ethos Distinction

In the introduction to this article, I asserted that educators must stop treating classroom management as a stand-alone problem. Pre-service teachers and seasoned teachers alike need to understand that classroom management, while important, is but a part of the classroom ethos. Many books on classroom management, by decontextualizing and narrowing their subject, do not aid teachers in reframing classroom management as integral within and only within its larger context. In this section, I explore the classroom management / classroom ethos distinction with reference to the relationships between the kinds of authority I earlier catalogued, and especially with reference to the coercion – consent distinction.

To review briefly, the taxonomy included the following eleven kinds of authority: charismatic, traditional, rational or legal (constitutional), titular, expertise, divine, spiritual, coercion (power), passion or conviction, self-authorization and consent. To understand classroom ethos, I suggest distinguishing three sub-categories among the catalogued sources of authority and then exploring how these kinds of authority combine to yield the desired classroom ethos for successful learning and teaching. Assume that teachers graduating from our programs arrive at their first teaching post in possession of the first group of three: rational/legal, titular and expertise. Recall that Weber (1947) connected expertise and appointment because he

assumed that people with recognized expertise gain appointments to positions of authority. The new teacher has acquired expertise, symbolized by the conferral of one or more university degrees. A Ministry or Department of Education which recognizes those degrees has, upon the teacher's application, awarded a teaching certificate, and a jurisdiction or independent school has offered the teacher a contract. The new teacher is literally *entitled* to carry out a program of instruction in a classroom. I have not stipulated the addition of power to these three types of authority, but I nevertheless recognize that educational legal structures are such that when teachers enter classrooms they do not do so alone, but they do so with the backing of school administrators, a school board or council. In fact, in some vague and likely inaccessible way, the entire apparatus of the state stands behind them, sometimes symbolized by the presence at the front of the classroom of a flag, a photograph of the current head of state, or both, reminding student and teacher alike that coercion—power—intrudes into the classroom whether they want it to or not.

A veteran teacher might possess any or all the five kinds of authority which I include in a second group: divine, spiritual, passion or conviction, charismatic and traditional. But I will sketch out conditions where teachers operate without each kind to establish in what sense these are necessary for building a productive and joyful successful classroom ethos. In a Christian school, a veteran might freely live out all those kinds or sources of authority. But for the sake of argument, I will stipulate that we consider a young new teacher, who is thus denied any of the traditional authority identified by Weber. Further, I will stipulate that our new teacher lacks the charisma exhibited by many real-life teachers or by Robin Williams as he played teacher John Keating in *The Dead Poet's Society* (Weir & Schulman, 1988). Regarding the divine call, let us assume that our teacher works in a public school setting, where Christian teachers—veteran and inductee alike—need to settle for some combination of private satisfaction and quiet incarnation of the fact that they teach in response to a divine call; job longevity will require that that particular kind of authority largely stay out of the line of inspection. But Christians and non-Christians alike can demonstrate wisdom, depth, mindfulness and interiority, and thus both live out

of and gain spiritual authority. And no law forbids that Christians live with depth and wisdom in public settings. The question remains, can an inductee teacher in her or his early- to mid-twenties gain such wisdom. Without wanting to offend any of my readers, I will state that wisdom comes only with age and experience (and, at that, age is a necessary, not a sufficient condition); only the rarest twenty-something inductee will enter his or her first classroom with much spiritual authority.

Meanwhile, passion and conviction—whether for teaching or for a subject area—remain age-blind, and, interestingly, have obvious connections to moral authority. Inductees can gain a measure of authority to carry out their teaching program by demonstrating daily that they cannot imagine a better place to spend their workdays than in a classroom, and that they come to class each day convinced that the person who lives without awareness of the importance of their subject is poor indeed. Furthermore, inductees don't have to repeat the conviction too many times, "I can't believe that they pay me to teach you; I would do this for free!" before they start to accumulate the kind of moral authority I described earlier. To summarize, divine, spiritual, conviction, charismatic and traditional authority will assist the teacher who wants to realize a program of instruction in a classroom. And none of these five kinds of authority, although each might be typically present in various combinations in successful classrooms, appears absolutely necessary. Teachers might desire every one of them, and arguably need some of them in combination, but not one of them is sufficient.

Two kinds of authority remain from my taxonomy: self-authorization and moral authority. These two sources of authority figure centrally in the creation of a positive and productive classroom ethos. I will deal begin my treatment of self-authorization by bringing our opera singer back on stage briefly. Earlier, I argued that many people who matter had to authorize her before any company would ever consider booking her to stand and sing in front of us. We are usually safe in assuming that she has the training, the skill or expertise, the repertoire and good reputation. But a moment comes—several actually—when she must stand and begin singing. Even if the company and the audience expect her to do so, she still must will herself to her feet and begin with her first note. Some entertainers love

what in show business is called *a cold start*, where they must begin their program or part of the program without introduction from an announcer or master of ceremonies. In one sense, our opera singer starts every piece with a cold start. And so does the teacher. On rare occasions, the principal, vice-principal or department head may introduce a new teacher to the class. Ordinarily, that teacher starts cold. In the circumstances, all other kinds of authority fade to the background, the teacher must authorize himself or herself, especially on the first day in a new school, the first day of a school year, or, even more sobering (Chandler, 2008), the first day of one's career.

The discussion now returns to consent, the second part of this final sub-classification of authority, because it remains the key element in creating the classroom ethos necessary for productive and joyful teaching and learning. The pre-service or induction teacher needs to understand, along with the veteran, that consent or good-will makes the difference between classroom management and classroom ethos. The classroom management literature has this right: all teachers, even veterans, face discipline problems. Testing the teacher simply makes up part of the educational landscape. But, to repeat (and to part company with much of the classroom management literature), classroom management is not a problem in a silo. Teachers facing these inevitable tests can avoid the naive responses of moving toward authoritarianism, permissiveness or constant negotiation by locating their understandings of discipline and classroom management, as well as their understanding of instruction, within their common proper context: the classroom ethos. Moreover, classroom ethos answers not only the question of discipline; it also answers the question of instruction. The kind of space where teaching and learning take place most productively and joyfully is the same kind of space where discipline problems arise least frequently and are defused most easily. In other words, failure—or success—at locating one's teaching within the framework of the classroom ethos answers both questions simultaneously.

To refer to my taxonomy of authority, for ongoing handling of disciplinary issues or for success in her or his instructional program, the new teacher cannot count on any of the first nine kinds of authority I listed. For that matter, self-authorization, while

necessary, will not be sufficient either. Regardless of what other unique combination or basket of kinds of authority each teacher has available, the consent of students remains the foundational layer of a productive and joyful classroom ethos. Worded inversely, classroom ethos relies on the consent that students grant in response to the teacher who gains their ongoing trust through just and caring action.

Conclusion

Authority is not primarily about discipline; it is primarily about the learning atmosphere of the classroom. The teacher's authority will obviously move to the foreground when continuation of instruction requires disciplinary intervention. Less obviously, the consent of the students remains in the foreground at all times through the instructional lesson, unit and year. The teacher's every word and move build or draw on that pool of student good will. Do the students see the teacher as a person of good character, as one to lead them in their learning? Is he an expert? Is she prepared? Does he care about them? Does she listen to what they say? Does he authorize them in the classroom as a corollary to their authorizing him? These questions must await future efforts, but they demonstrate how much greater is the breadth of the question of classroom ethos compared to what is usually called classroom management, and they demonstrate as well the interconnection between moral authority and the classroom ethos,

By definition, coercion never resolves or guarantees the teacher's moral authority. Minimal compliance does not mean the ruled-over's consent to the ruler's exercise of power, and it does not create the conditions necessary for learning. On the other hand, moral authority usually guarantees the existence of a classroom ethos conducive to learning. To the extent that students willingly consent to their teachers' charge over them, their goodwill toward those teachers implies that they recognize their authority. Outstanding teachers everywhere teach with day to day with just such authority and know this truth.

Finally, as professors in teacher-training programs, we must model the above. We must become more intentional about demonstrating our understanding that our own students authorize us and our work as their education professors. We must help our pre-service teachers move beyond the desire to learn the

latest classroom management techniques, enabling them to tangle with the larger and ultimately more productive matter of creating a joyful and productive classroom ethos in the spirit of teaching and learning rise above concerns about discipline. The creation of such a classroom ethos is the ultimate measure of a good teacher's authority. And that teacher recognizes that the main fruit produced by that authority is enhanced student learning.

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