Intergenerational Teaching
A User’s Guide
Intergenerational Issues

- MULTICULTURALISM AND THE TRANSFORMED CLASSROOM
- TEACHING AND LEARNING IDENTITIES
- STORY TELLING AND EMPATHY (ROLE PLAYING)
- STORY TRUTHS (VIRTUAL STUDENT)

1. Meet the students where they are.
2. Listen to their stories.
   - Relate to them.
3. Tell your stories.
4. Share the “rules” of the culture.
   - Multiculturalism
5. Transform the classroom.
6. Relate to individuals—identity issues.
The Ultimate Social Experiment

My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student

Rebekah Nathan
What Goes on at AnyU

- Time Crunches—not the “millennials”—the management “minimalists”
  - Skip class when expedient
  - Pick and choose preparation efforts
    - “Fewer than one-third spend even one hour studying or doing homework for every hour in class”
      - (Higher Education Research Institute survey of more than thirty thousand freshmen)
      - “More than three-quarters (77%) of all students who study 10 or fewer hours per week get a B or better” (121)
    - Turn in less than their best
    - Cheating is morally justified (profs.’ lack of compassion)
  - Cultivate personal relationships with professors
Exigencies of Student Life

- Dirty looks at the Ivory Tower
- Professors as Employers; students as employees
  - Payment and Power
- Professors have an easy life
- Professors don’t understand students’ problems
  - Stay in school or get the car fixed?
  - Drop a class and eat for a month.
  - Telling professors equals permission.
How to Tell a “True” Story About Your Generation

- Tell it like it *seemed* to you.

- That 70’s Woman
  - (A variant of “Abraham Lincoln Goes to Middle School History Class.”)

  - “When I was your age” . . . .
    - My challenges were . . . .
Story Truths and Happening Truths

- Telling Our Stories, From Tim O’Brien’s *The Things They Carried*:

  “Absolute occurrence is irrelevant. A thing may happen and be a total lie; another thing may not happen and be truer than the truth” (89).
In any war [life] story, but especially a true one, it’s difficult to separate what happened from what seemed to happen. What seems to happen becomes its own happening and has to be told that way.

[Afterward] when you go to tell about it, there is always that surreal seemingness, which makes the story seem untrue, but which in fact represents the hard and exact truth as it seemed” (78).
That Seventies Woman!
Responses to the Class Visit

“I thought it was neat how she got the class riled up about issues in today’s society. At first no one would say anything then everyone started talking about all kinds of things they didn’t like.

The 70’s woman really made me feel like I could do anything that a man could do. If I didn’t get as much pay as men, I could fight for the right to be paid as much as men. The 70’s woman seemed like a real strong woman.”
“I would like to thank you for coming and speaking to our class.

The most memorable thought you shared with us was how hard women like you worked to pave the dusty road we women travel daily. The unfair persecution you persevered [sic] made it so we today have a better and easier chance of fulfilling our dreams. We are not held by the iron fist of a man like you were.

Bravo to you for the work you have done and the success you have in your life. To quote a modern phrase, ‘You go, girl!’

Thank you again for fighting the good fight. We could not do it without women like you!
Dear 70’s Woman,

Your visit last week was great! You made me feel empowered [sic] as a woman, and reminded me that as young women we must never forget or take advantage of all the wonderful things the women before us have fought for us to have. It is important for us to carry on in the same way and stand up for the things we believe in. Just wanted you to know your visit was very encouraging to me.
“Reality hit home when discussing the amounts of BMW’s and homes in Columbus, and how “our generation” is beginning to see some hardships in our lives. You really don’t know what you have until you hear someone else’s perspective. I really enjoyed you! Thanks for visiting!”
Thanx so much for coming in! It was very interesting to get a personal view of the 70’s.

The thing that sticks out for me is just how passionate and outspoken you were and still are about social issues. People in my generation—early 20 year olds—they too are passionate about our social issues, but we are not so quick to yell like your generation is. Don’t get me wrong, we yell, but the 90’s taught us political correctness, it was fed into us as children. You didn’t have that, so where you are free we are bound. I wish my generation just had the guts to plainly say, “Leave our money alone! We earn, we keep it
But we can’t there are too many humanity issues that stop the words from leaving our mouths. I enjoyed seeing the enthusiasm you kept from your generation, it is one of the things that maybe my generation can pick up.

- I had to write fast, or I would have written longer, hope you get my point. Thanx again!

- P.S. Hope we hear from you again.
Thanks for speaking to our class. Your story helps me to realize how important it is to be a woman in today’s society.
Use a Text!!!

- Two poems here:
  - Marge Piercy’s “Barbie Doll”
  - Sylvia Plath’s “Mirror”
Intergenerational Teaching

1. Tell the stories you know.

2. Ask questions about generational differences.

3. Reveal the rules of the (academic) game. The point is to learn about life in order to make the best choices.