

A Brief Autobiography

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ECS 101-013

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January 27, 2023

My values and beliefs for teaching have been something I've had trouble putting on paper. I feel like an assignment such as this has challenged me to bring those values to light and try to critically analyze why, and from where, my educational views come from.

My journey to teaching began in kindergarten. Where I became dead set on becoming either an archaeologist or a paleontologist. I held onto this dream up until my eighth grade year, where things changed. It was at our class graduation that I noticed the people around me that I had grown up with, many of them since kindergarten, were not the same people. Neither was I to them; at that moment standing up in the gym we grew up in, I felt out of place. Standing beside my classmates and my teacher at our graduation, I didn't feel excited, or even relieved. As I mulled over my eighth grade year and thought back on everything that had happened throughout, it occurred to me that I could do better. That I could teach better than my teacher had. I looked over and saw my family in the crowd. My parents were there. My grandma and my aunts were there. My uncles were there. They had my back, and they were happy for me. And so I too felt happy.

School can teach you everything. It can teach you how to open up, it can teach you how to read, how to make friends, how to analyze. But if abused it teaches that you don't measure up. That what you do is never good enough and cannot ever be good enough. A teacher shouldn't ever make students feel inadequate. Teachers are so prevalent in young lives and they influence more than they can imagine.

My decision to pursue education is a relatively new one. High school was a breath of fresh air. It was nothing like elementary. And better yet, nothing like elementary had portrayed it. The teachers in high school weren't all angry people who hated their jobs, they were awesome. It felt like I was friends with many of my teachers. That I could talk to them. It was these people I

met that are lifelong friends, teachers and students alike. It was only in my late high school years that my career ideas began to shift towards teaching. I received encouragement from multiple teachers, whether they be professional or otherwise. A parent can be a teacher just as a friend can or a sibling and so on. A notable example of this educational encouragement is the help and advice from one of my high school teachers, Cori Saas. Mrs. Saas aided me in accessing this university and advised me on what to expect in my studies and campus life. As well as informing me on what I could do. As it turned out Education wasn't just accessible through my classes, it was everywhere. Clubs, groups, people, places, et cetera. I've found that by engaging these aspects of university life I've gained a wealth of insight into both teaching and learning.

My perspective on education is that it goes both ways. In that as a teacher I teach as well as learn. You cannot have one without the other, nor a teacher without a student. Learning is accomplished via many means but at the core of any learning is understanding. Understanding offers insight and knowledge that can then be applied accordingly. I believe discussion offers students opportunities to speak when they otherwise wouldn't; I believe that humiliation has no place in the classroom in any capacity. Humiliation is not a teaching tool; humiliation breeds resentment and resistance to learning. The question of whether or not I am a teacher 24/7 I feel has no one clear answer. For myself I feel teaching 24/7 is applicable knowledge—even if you're outside of the classroom—the knowledge is somewhere in your mind. It is accessible and ready for one to use at will.

My woodshop teacher said to me, late into my twelfth grade year, that I could still be a teacher with long hair. This stuck with me because I've had my long hair since before I even started school. I used to be called a girl often both in and out of school as a way to belittle me. It was almost a right of passage to have such an ancient part of me be brought up all these years

later, and in such a casual yet serious way. My teacher had meant that teaching is based on the contents of your character and not on your superficial features. And after having it brought up, it reminded me that I could teach. That I could go follow this and make it.

This small portion of some of my educational values and beliefs are understandings I've come to throughout my life, but only recently related to education. I am passionate about pursuing teaching and to learn the most I can. So far this goal is consistent with my learning experiences here at the University of Regina.