To construct a new ideal to define what it means to be literate, Benjamin Endres turns to Jurgen Habermas's "discourse" to offer an ethic for literacy and to examine the conditions that must be met to be in communion with the other. The acceptance of language as "the specific medium of understanding" and Habermas's choice to "ignore nonverbalized actions and bodily expressions" is disconcerting, limiting the view of what it means to be educated to the cognitive domain. The limitations of language, when disembodied from the self, resonate throughout Hester Prynne's anguish as she searches for the comforts of home. In "The Politics of Translation," Gayatri Spivak locates the task of interpretation or translation as a way to consider language as a clue to the workings of gendered agency. Spivak sees language as providing clues to knowledge that permit people to engage in the site of negotiation or the place where communication occurs. In deconstructing language, she distinguishes between its logic and rhetoric. For her, rhetoric works in the silence between and around words to see what works and how much. As a way of addressing the shortcomings of Habermas's "discourse" as an ethic for literacy, and to expand on what Spivak calls rhetoric in her politics of translation, a consideration of John Dewey's writings on feelings and emotions offers an ethic that other literacy paradigms fall short in providing. To accept a cognitive paradigm for any ethic in education destines people to be lost in the labyrinth of their minds. (NKA)
Emotion: An Embodied Ethic for Literacy

Colette Gosselin Rutgers University

A tendency to speculation, though it may keep woman quiet, as it does man, yet makes her sad....As a first step, the whole of society is to be torn down, and built anew. Then, the very nature of the opposite sex, or its long hereditary habit, which has become like nature, is to be essentially modified, before woman can be allowed to assume what seems a fair and suitable position. Finally, all other difficulties being obviated, woman cannot take advantage of these preliminary reforms until she herself shall have undergone preliminary reforms, until she herself shall have undergone still mightier changes, in which the ethereal essence, wherein she has her truest life, will be found to have evaporated. A woman never overcomes these problems by any exercise of thought. They are not to be solved, or only in one way. If her heart chance to come uppermost, they vanish. Thus Hester Prynne, whose heart had lost its regular and healthy throb, wandered without a clew in the dark labyrinth of mind; now turned aside by an insurmountable precipice; now starting back from the deep chasm. There was a wild and ghastly scenery all around her, and a home and comfort nowhere.

Pointing to the need to broaden our conception of what it means to be literate in modern society, Benjamin Endres contests the reductionist view of literacy as a basic ability to read and write and critiques traditional paradigms that view literacy as a catalyst for social revolution or as a means to increase material productivity or democratic participation. As a way of constructing a new ideal to define what it means to be literate,
Endres turns to Jürgen Habermas' "discourse" to offer an ethic for literacy and to examine the conditions that must be met to be in communion with the other. But as Endres points out, "discourse" depends upon settings where routine interaction is suspended so that reflective dialogue can made possible. It requires what Habermas calls the "hypothetical attitude," which is echoed by John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice*, where in the original position we step behind the "veil of ignorance," where we alienate ourselves from ourselves, where we strip ourselves of experience, erasing ourselves of categories of race, class, and gender, and make ourselves invisible in an effort "to see" ourselves through the lens of the other.2

The disembodiment present in both paradigms and the turn to a universal pragmatics, to an abstract "reality," and to reason to establish an ethic raises the question of what it means to be educated in modern times and ignores the contingency of the everyday that this ethic wants to inform. While we may applaud the move to understanding as a new ideal for literacy, the acceptance of language as "the specific medium of understanding" and Habermas's choice to "ignore nonverbalized actions and bodily expresssions"3 is disconcerting, limiting our view of what it means to be educated to the cognitive domain.

The limitations of language, when it is disembodied from the self, resonate throughout Hester Prynne's anguish as she searches for the comforts of home; a home that is a felt experience in the body as feelings and emotions, meanings that words and reason oftentimes blur or cannot capture. While Habermas does not completely ignore feelings and emotion, in theory, he wants to locate validity claims in language and assumes that
the speaker can know truth and that the listener can interpret truth. But what "is" and what "appears" are two entirely different things, and we know from Aristotle's aim of investigations that we begin our deliberation to become good on appearances or what we think we know. Acknowledging the distinction between thinking and knowing is essential as we attempt to "interpret" and "narrate" our perspective and the perspective of the other, and such acknowledgment fosters acceptance that the construction of meaning is slippery in our contingent world.

To Gayatri Spivak, "language isn't everything. It is only a vital clue to where the self loses its boundaries." In The Politics of Translation, Spivak locates the task of interpretation or translation as a way to consider language as a clue to the workings of gendered agency. For Spivak, meaning unfolds as the speaker's location is unbraided to reveal the inner workings that have been constructed in the historical and social moment. She sees language as providing clues to knowledge that permit us to engage in the site of negotiation or the place where communication occurs. By focusing on this interstitial space, the politics of language can serve as a means of eliminating the binary logic of Western translation, which remains stuck in a literal or figurative translation of language. In deconstructing language, Spivak distinguishes between its logic and rhetoric. To her, the logic of language allows us to jump from word to word by means of clearly indicated connections, while its rhetoric disrupts this logic and generates space for contingency. As she describes it, rhetoric works in the silence between and around words to see what works and how much. However, for Spivak, translation is never complete for the speaker or the listener, as each has her own claims to knowledge which is utilized in this
interpretation, and so the difficult task then is to bring ourselves as close as possible to
the authentic experience while knowing that this map of knowledge will be continually
redrawn, contested, and can never be definitive.

Still, the value is placed on reason, thought, and on the spoken word, or the tension
between words in language. This preoccupation in the West with a mode of inquiry and
the expression of agency and/or ideas in the form of a verbal utterance generates
discomfort for this author; it is as if reason has colonized the body. While "thinking [is at
times] an end in itself," Dewey reminds us that "the pangs, the travail of thought, the
arduousness of reflection, the loneliness of meditation, the heaviness of deliberation, are
all proverbial. "5 Traditionally viewed as radical alternatives in Western thought,
gestures, feelings, emotions, and apparent silence are subtle yet powerful and meaningful
acts, which are noticeably absent from the new ideal that Endres has proposed.

While thinking of what Habermas means by the "hypothetical moment" as the
moment where the possibility of understanding can be met, I ask "how could we ever
know it?" and perhaps more importantly, "how could we even know misunderstanding?"
through a cognitive paradigm. As a way of addressing the shortcomings of Habermas's
"discourse" as an ethic for literacy, and to expand on what Spivak calls rhetoric in her
politics of translation, I turn to Dewey's writings on feelings and emotions to consider an
ethic that other literacy paradigms fall short in providing.
Dewey said that our "emotional reactions form the chief materials of our knowledge of ourselves and others." He draws a distinction between feelings in its narrow conception as sensory stimulus, such as those that correspond to choking, suffocation, and heart palpitations, and feelings or emotions in their broadest context which have "face-to-face consciousness of worth" and are "conditioned upon the presence of an image." To have worth means that we place value on feelings. Their presence is a statement of a judgment that is made and is therefore a statement of moral conduct. They inform us of habits, beliefs, and ideals formed in prior experience. Comprised of both feeling and intellect, emotions are found where there is a certain tension or conflict between the image and the feeling reaction. Emotion involves disturbance and agitation. Whenever there is emotion, there is a divergence between the sense situation and the image situation. A continual oscillation, a continual alternation between the image and the existing situation. The excitation, then the disturbance which is characteristic of all emotion being stirred up, is due precisely to the fact that the given situation is thrown into relief over against an ideal (EAV, 112).

It is this tension in the situation that alerts us to misunderstanding, or, in the absence of tension, where we recognize the appearance of understanding. Still, while feelings such as doubt, anger, or passion are powerful and immediate signifiers that bring us in tune with prior habits, Dewey tells us that feelings are not necessarily and finally trustworthy, for "things which seem to possess a negative value immediately may possess a very positive one measured in terms of final outcomes...and vice versa" (EAV, 111). And so "we must use intellectual processes to make up for deficiencies of this too direct valuation" (EAV, 111). We need our intellect to bring resolution, to transform emotion into interest, to attach feelings directly to the idea or image (EAV, 112). Therefore, while
we use our intellect to form new habits or undergo growth, it is in our emotions that we
begin deliberation and inquiry and make the move toward understanding a possibility. It
is in an ethic of emotion that we may begin to think about the conditions Habermas sees
as necessary to achieve understanding.

To accept a cognitive paradigm for any ethic in education destines us to be like Hester
Prynne, lost in the dark labyrinth of our minds, alienated from ourselves, forever to seek
the comfort of home to serve as our guide in our search for truth.

1986).


3. Jürgen Habermas, "What is Universal Pragmatics" in Communication and the

4. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "The Politics of Translation," in Destabilizing Theory,


7. John Dewey, "The Emotional Aspect of Volition," in Lectures in Psychological and
Political Ethics:1898, ed. Donald F. Koch (New York: Hafner Press, 1976), 111. This
e ssay will be cited as EAV in the text for all subsequent references.
Reproduction Release
(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Emotion: An Embodied Ethic for Literacy
Author(s): Colthe Rosaline
Corporate Source: Philosophy of Education
Publication Date: 3/1998

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign in the indicated space following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2A</th>
<th>Level 2B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="#" alt="Sample Sticker" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Sample Sticker" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Sample Sticker" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

DOCUMENTS WILL BE PROCESSED AS INDICATED PROVIDED REPRODUCTION QUALITY PERMITS.

If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.
I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and
disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche, or electronic media by
persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder.
Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of
educators in response to discrete inquiries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature: Colletta Grossel</th>
<th>Printed Name/Position/Titl: Colletta Grossel / Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization/Address: 38 South Ave.</td>
<td>Telephone: 609-897-9231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fax: 609-897-9231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E-mail Address: Colletta @ AOL.com</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from
another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not
announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also
be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available
through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor: Philosophy of Education, A 1998
Address: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Price: $4.00

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate
name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the
document being contributed) to:

ERIC/REC Clearinghouse
2805 E 10th St Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698
Telephone: 812-855-5847
Toll Free: 800-759-4723
FAX: 812-856-5512
e-mail: erics@indiana.edu
WWW: http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/

EFF-088 (Rev. 9/97)