

In the last few years I have been doing work for pay within a number of formal educational settings. Teaching intensive courses for a week or a month to professors and students enabled, and enables, me to engage in education as the practice of freedom without restrictions or fear of punishing reprisals. This is an utterly rewarding experience. I understand fully Palmer's assertion: "I am a teacher at heart, and there are moments in the classroom when I can hardly hold the joy." My leaving a high-ranking tenured position opened up new spaces for teaching and learning that renewed and restored my spirit and enabled me to hold onto the joy in teaching that makes my heart glad.

bell hooks

Teaching Community

A Pedagogy of Hope

(2003) New York: Routledge

Teach 3

Talking Race and Racism

Teachers are often among that group most reluctant to acknowledge the extent to which white-supremacist thinking informs every aspect of our culture including the way we learn, the content of what we learn, and the manner in which we are taught. Much of the consciousness-raising around the issue of white supremacy and racism has focused attention on teaching what racism is and how it manifests itself in the daily workings of our lives. In anti-racist workshops and seminars, much of the time is often spent simply breaking through the denial that leads many unenlightened white people, as well as people of color, to pretend that racist and white-supremacist thought and action are no longer pervasive in our culture.

In classroom settings I have often listened to groups of students tell me that racism really no longer shapes the contours of our lives, that there is just no such thing as racial difference, that "we are all just people." Then a few minutes later I give them an

