

The most influential book that I have read over the years is very likely on the list of many contributors. Paulo Freire's classic, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Continuum 1970, 1993) so formed my pedagogical vision that dialogic teaching remains at the center of all the teaching that I do. The distinction he drew between "banking education" and liberatory education revolutionized pedagogy and prepared it for a world of multiple truths and pluralistic perspectives. But dialogue can be a difficult craft to master in the classroom. Most of us struggled through trial and error to understand authentic dialogue in the classroom versus the uncritical sharing of opinion. Nicholas C. Burbules', *Dialogue and Teaching: Theory and Practice* (Teachers College Press, 1993), sorts through the confusion. He presents teachers with a clear paradigm of the various ways that dialogue can be used in a pedagogical context: conversation, inquiry, debate and instruction. This is a book I wish had been written years ago when I was learning to teach! Lastly, Jane Vella's *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach: the Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults* (Jossey-Bass, 1994) grounds dialogic teaching in her own considerable multicultural teaching praxis. She first outlines twelve basic principles for effective adult learning. Then she explains each of these principles, across cultures and internationally. She has a superb ability to analyze her teaching practice. This is a book that on the surface appears basic and functional. But a closer read reveals the elegant simplicity of a complex idea clearly explained. I know of no better book that articulates so simply and so accurately the complicated process of pedagogical logic and design.