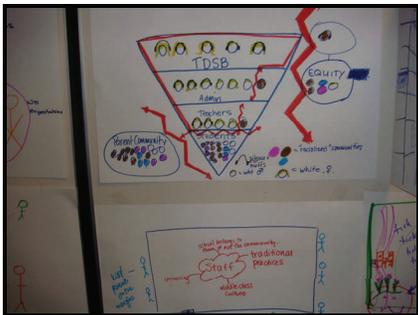


Work With Urban/Inner City Teachers:

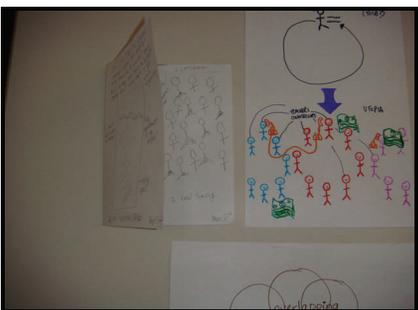
Professor Fine provided a full day session for 30 elementary and secondary school teachers on Friday, March 27th at OISE. Supply teacher coverage was provided for teachers so they could be a part of the full-day event. Over the course of the day teachers were able to engage with Professor Fine in a Participatory Action Research (PAR) process. The focus was "PAR on Educational Climate Change: Toward a Doubled Practice of Engagement and Critique Across Elementary and Secondary/K-12 and University". The day was extremely inspiring and intellectually stimulating. The teachers decided to continue to meet and share common issues and concerns and plan for Educational Climate Change in their own schools. The Centre for Urban Schooling is pleased to be able to support this new network of teachers.



Drawing from workshop activity

Comments from teachers:

I really felt valued from the moment I entered the boardroom. While I feel that I am very important to my students and colleagues, the prevailing sentiment among my colleagues is that



Drawing from workshop activity

we are undervalued and underappreciated. I think perhaps that the underappreciated sentiment is one that flows from the world outside of our relationships with each other and with our students. I felt like entering the boardroom initiated a break from the world of the unappreciated teacher, and into restful change...

At the symposium, I heard teachers frankly discuss their guilt and this guilt is something that I openly acknowledge myself. We will always feel like we could be doing more; simultaneously, we are feeling like we can't possibly do more. I have come to call it the guilt paradox, the paralyzing source of bouts of insomnia. Collective anxiety. Call it what you will, the self-reflecting teachers I met today were able to discuss it and how we work to mitigate it.

Kirsten Boutilier
Central Technical School, TDSB

Taking part in a focus group with Michelle Fine afforded me the opportunity to regain hope and to believe once again that dedicated and like-minded educators can collectively make positive change. Michelle Fine's action research examples encompassed the belief that public institutions have a social responsibility to empower individuals with knowledge, choice and opportunity. Michelle Fine created an uninhibiting environment that encouraged participants to share freely their options and ideas, by identifying perceived barriers within an inner city elementary school community and sharing various strategies to take immediate action.

Diana Kordic
Model School Lead Teacher, Willow Park PS. TDSB

The Michelle Fine, William Waters Symposium was an incredibly inspirational opportunity to share experiences and address the challenges facing educators in Toronto's Inner City schools. The workshops provided a safe and supportive environment where participants could be candid in challenging and questioning equity issues affecting their students and families. Discussions included programs that empowered students, families and the communities where they live, safe school environments, and an inclusive curriculum that connects to our students and their families.

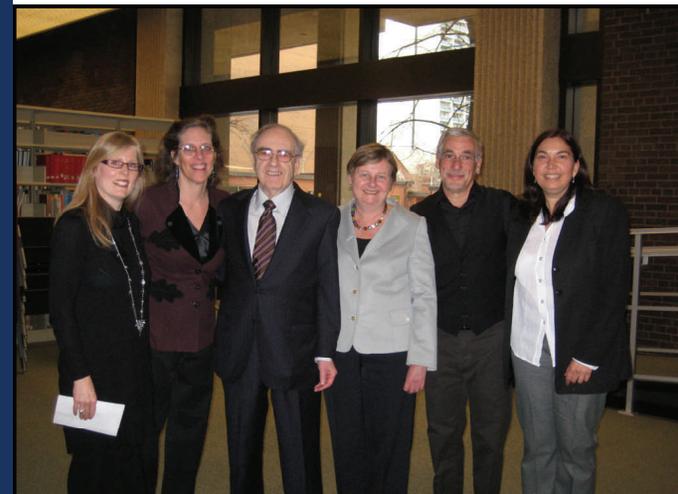
Michelle Fine's research and writings focusing on participatory action research emphasized the importance of students being activists in addressing their needs and obstacles they face as members of urban communities. Creating an advisory group that includes their perspectives and their voices not only gives students leadership opportunities but allows us as educators to truly understand the effects of poverty on our students' learning.

As part of knowing our students and communities, The William Waters Symposium allowed educators to engage in valuable discussions regarding the challenges we face in implementing a curriculum that does not truly reflect our unique and diverse population. Passionate teachers discussed the challenges of delivering an inclusive curriculum with little professional development, with few resources that truly reflect their students and within a crumbling grey and dirty environment that is uninspiring and unsafe for learning.

I look forward to meeting with these truly exceptional educators again, listening to the voices of our students and collaborating to examine needs, develop a plan and create strategies that will affect positive change that our students and families deserve. The creation of the advisory group will give us the opportunity to examine ourselves, our teaching practices, hear our students' voices and help us to understand the conditions affecting them and communities where they live and learn.

Dorothy Gitter
Teaching/Learning Coach, Cluster 7,
Model Schools for Inner Cities, TDSB

The Centre for Urban Schooling is looking forward to the 2010 William Waters Symposium. Please check our website for information on next years symposium as it becomes available at: cus.oise.utoronto.ca



Dr. Kathleen Gallagher, Dr. Michelle Fine, Dr. William Waters, Dean Jane Gaskell, Jeff Kugler, CTL Chair Tara Goldstein

The First Annual William Waters Symposium on Urban Education March 2009

OISE
Ontario Institute For Studies In Education
University of Toronto
cus.oise.utoronto.ca

The First Annual William Waters Symposium on Urban Education

The Centre for Urban Schooling hosted the first annual William Waters Symposium on Urban Education, which took place at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto from March 25th -27th. This annual event inspires discussion and debate on important issues of research and practice in urban education in Canada.

Professor Michelle Fine was the featured scholar for this first symposium. Professor Fine is a Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the Graduate Center - City University of New York in Social Personality Psychology, Urban Education and Women's Studies.

The William Waters Symposium was multifaceted in both structure and audience. We share below some voices from the symposium.

The Public Lecture:

There was an inspiring public lecture attended by over 200 people on the evening of March 25th. The title of the lecture was "When objects become subjects: a 25 year journey from laboratory experimentation ethnography to participatory action research with youth"

Comment on the public lecture:

On March 25th, hundreds of students, faculty and community members huddled together in OISE's library to hear Michelle Fine speak. Her lecture was engaging, accessible, funny, fresh and intellectually stimulating. Her talk cut across decades, theoretical frameworks, and conversations in time. As Fine spoke of the phenomenon of

"push-outs" in U.S high schools (drop-outs), to her work with participatory action research to an in-depth conversation about what it means to do critical work in public spaces. She reminded us of our privilege. That one person's freedom is always

bound up in another's entrapment, and that shifting the unit of analysis in our work (from individual to system) is work not only worth doing, but theoretically and ethically essential. Rarely, have I had the pleasure to witness lecturers cover such breadth in content and form.

Sarah Switzer, Graduate Student, OISE/UT



Drawing from workshop activity

Work With Teacher Educators:

Professor Fine also worked with a group of 25 OISE teacher educators in a workshop session on the afternoon of March 25th. Her work with teacher educators revolved around posing a number of questions, which came from the experience of the teacher educators who had just completed their observation of teacher candidates in their school placements. The session allowed the participants to think about what needs to change about who/how we prepare for work in marginalized and racilaized schools.

Comments from teacher educators:

For me, the learning experience with Michelle Fine was one of those "moments that matter" that she described. The image of



Drawings from workshop activity

finding a crack in the sidewalk where a garden can grow has become a metaphor for our work. She helped me to rethink my ideas about using teacher inquiry with our teacher candidates to see ways to make the process more critical, meaningful and authentic by introducing them to participatory action research. Her facilitative skills were inspiring. She provided ways to open and frame courageous conversations, to question, to cross borders, to recognize multiple contexts and to engage in powerful relational work.

Kathy Broad, Director, Initial Teacher Education, OISE/UT

I should confess that while I had heard of Michelle Fine, I was really a neophyte in terms of her actual work prior to her coming to OISE for the William Waters symposium. In preparation for her visit, I spent a couple of hours reading about her impressive breadth of activities, prolific publication record and insights into the small school movement and urban education. As such, I was primed to hold high expectations for the session with teacher educators. Not only was I not disappointed, I was delighted! The session was filled with vivid accounts of specific participatory action research projects and conceptual insights into the complexities of teacher educators' work.

Beyond these merits, however, was the power Michelle Fine's humour, candour and clarity as a master popular educator who modeled and animated a process of learning that built upon 500 years of teacher educators' collective knowledge and experience.

I left this session with a strong conviction that the process and content she had shared with us would significantly inform and shape my work in pre-service education with schools and communities. Already, I have begun to re-conceptualize how my program, which is situated in public high schools, might embrace and apply the participatory action research (PAR) process- collaborating with youth, teachers, community members and pre-service teacher candidates to engage in critical inquiry for education and social change. I have carried the energy of the inspiration of her work to discussions with my colleagues, inquiring how we might re-vision our course assignments and learning activities through the PAR-lens. Most recently, my collaborative research projects based in urban high schools has, in my mind, had its purpose and process tweaked as a result of the Fine symposium.

In short, I cannot recall the last time (if ever), a "PD session" has had such an impactful and/or substantive effect!

David Montemurro, Director, Secondary Initial Teacher Education Program (Consecutive), OISE/UT and SPICE coordinator



Drawing from workshop activity



Teachers participating in workshop