

## Carrying it Forward

Today, on our last Seminar together, let's start by writing out something we can do in our courses or departments to "carry forward" the inspiring lessons from our legendary CUNY predecessors: Audre Lorde, June Jordan, and Toni Cade Bambara. In reading these inspiring writers--whose words continue to move us decades later---think about and jot out one thing, however small, that you can commit to doing to carry this forward: at CUNY, in your professional associations, with colleagues, in your program and, of course, for your students.

Name, Wish, Text/Moment of Inspiration

Name, School: **Tom Zlabinger, York College**

Wish: That my students find something they learned in our class still useful 50 years from now. I would hope something taught could be future proof.

Text/Moment of Inspiration: When a group of musicians took up the charge to use the telematic studio on their own outside of rehearsal/class.

Name, School: **Kathleen Tamayo Alves, Queensborough Community College**

Wish: To use my emotions as power, rather than as an obstacle, in my teaching and administrative duties

Text/Moment of Inspiration: Audre Lorde's "The Uses of Anger:" Every woman has a well-stocked arsenal of anger potentially useful against those oppressions, personal and institutional, which brought that anger into being. Focused with precision it can become a powerful source of energy serving progress and change. And when I speak of change, I do not mean a simple switch of positions or a temporary lessening of tensions, nor the ability to smile or feel good. I am speaking of a basic and radical alteration in those assumptions underlining our lives.

I welcome my students' and colleagues' anger as a means to understand the different ways in which we are oppressed, and how we can harness our privilege(s) to uplift others in the way that we can.

Name, School: **Reiko Tahara, Hunter College**

Wish:

I wish to keep involving my student-teachers in the curriculum making, not only my courses but the entire dept. I wish my students' wish to have one Black full-time faculty in our dept will come true soon.

Text/Moment of Inspiration:

June Jordan's life studies booklet has been my inspiration for a few years now. It was so nice to read Audre Lorde's class memo too. Reading Toni Bambara, I wondered about my Asian students too.

Name, School: **Cheryl C. Smith, Baruch College**

Wish: To get good work done NOW. To make change NOW. To have courage and be DELIBERATE, and afraid of nothing

Text/Moment of Inspiration: When Bambara talks about “Work To Be Done Immediately”--the urgency, the now, the must get to it, the force.  
Lorde: connecting the classroom to our “daily living” and Jordan: if there’s disconnect between school and life, students will disconnect.

Name, School: **Lara Saguisag, College of Staten Island**

Wish:  
I want Saturdays to take place in my classroom.

Text/Moment of Inspiration:  
Inspired by June Jordan’s “Life Studies”

Name, School: **Rojo Robles Mejias, Baruch College**

Wish: Keep exploring ungrading alternatives, self evaluation, accessibility and student-centered methods.

Text/Moment of Inspiration:

I love Audre Lorde's open question: "in what way do you see yourself altering the course and the effects of... (29) It makes me think of the ongoing possibilities of altering courses by the students based on their needs and interests, but more so their realities.

Name, School: **Susan Phillip, New York City College of Technology**

Wish: To be humane

Text/Moment of Inspiration:

Relevant information to students

Name, School: **Niberca Luberes (Gigi Polo), College of Staten Island**

Wish:  
to build work-life balance  
Inspire on the edges of disruption and brave conversations

Text/Moment of Inspiration:  
Accepting failure/ recovering  
\*ungrading

Name, School: **Alyse Keller, Kingsborough Community College**

Wish:

- 1) I wish to Disrupt boundaries in the classroom, Help students face fears by facing my own & instill confidence

Text/Moment of Inspiration:

- 1) Lorde
- 2) Chavez

Name, School: **Heather Huggins, Queensborough Community College**

Wish:

Including the fullness of our humanity, as often as we can, welcoming participation and collaboration in as many ways as possible

Making the resistance visible so we can work with the tension, cross the boundaries, and transform our limiting mindsets

Text/Moment of Inspiration:

Each of the books and writings are simmering in me

I most often find myself sharing Toni Cade Bambara's writings on mysticism and spirituality --- the need for more words, the recognition that western language emerged out of dominance and violence -- the wish to disrupt with love and care--- being, belonging, moving together

Name, School: **Jason Hendrickson, LaGuardia Community College**

Wish: Seeing Jordan, Lorde, and Bambara remind me of how I am inextricably intertwined with a broader struggle that goes beyond the classroom. My fear is that CUNY and higher education on the whole have traveled so far in the opposite direction that the ideals of these three titans have been craftily tokenized. While some of the more tangible goals have been realized (like Black Studies departments), the connection with community and the impetus, if not the *soul*, of Lorde/Jordan/Bambara's desires seems to be lost. So, I wish to push back against this.

Text/Moment of Inspiration:

Audre Lorde's syllabus + Bambara's Pt II (13-14)

Name, School: **Javiela Evangelista, New York City College of Technology**

Wish: I have been moved by our conversations here and wish to bring the energy with me as I move forward with students at the center of my courses and love guiding.

Text/Moment of Inspiration: This Man poem (Jordan)  
Students are not satisfied, why? (Barbara) Prejudice  
against diff not American (Lorde)

Name, School: **Fidelito Cortes, Hunter College**

Wish: To be able to persevere in a racist institution, like Audre Lorde, despite all the challenges and constraints that the character faced in the novella. A further wish is to inspire students, especially those in similar situations, to learn tools and develop resilience to do the same.

Text/Moment of Inspiration: Deotha by Audre Lorde. Additionally, her syllabi and course proposals have been eye-opening and thoroughly instructive.

Name, School: **Anita Cheng, Hunter College/ Brooklyn College**

Wish: The texts we have gotten to read have been so inspiring, I hope that they will be incorporated more fully into introductory college courses. To change the challenge of evaluation into the support of mutual access and sharing.

Text/Moment of Inspiration:

To read Bambara's dream of valuing, informing, buttressing and protecting the students for all their backgrounds.

Name, School: **Helen Chang, Hostos Community College**

Wish:

Creating the culture of openness and sharing that I've seen here in my classes and sharing what I've learned with my colleagues

Text/Moment of Inspiration:

What we are a part of part 1 seeing Adrienne Rich's handwritten notes and assignments on the first few pages and seeing the same similar in Audre Lorde

Name, School: **Kristina Baines, Guttman Community College**

Wish:

The classroom becoming a space of vulnerability and care- and the students understanding this as part of the learning process



Text/Moment of Inspiration:

Audre Lorde writes about the learning process as acts of mutual care as well as expressions of hostility